



TOWN OF BUENA VISTA 2015 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



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Chapter 1

THE COMMUNITY VISION



The Board of Trustees Mission

The goal of the Board of Trustees is to provide high-quality, reliable services for the benefit of the Town of Buena Vista citizens, guests, and employees, while being good stewards of public resources and the natural setting.

The 2016 Strategic Plan Citizens Collective Vision Statement

This Collective Vision Statement was first adopted as part of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, and was derived from the exact wording provided by citizens during the Comprehensive Plan process. Trustees have regularly visited the Collective Vision Statement for relevancy over the succeeding years and made changes as appropriate, including in preparation for the 2015 Comprehensive Plan process. The Collective Vision Statement establishes the context for the Board of Trustees and Town staff when making decisions, prioritizing, and establishing policy for Buena Vista. We as a community want this vision as a whole, not simply components of this vision. While we can pick and choose elements within the Comprehensive Plan for direction, we must turn to the Collective Vision Statement for the context of the community.

General Community Character

We envision the town as a clean, safe, quiet, and secure community that is a desirable place to live, work, and play – an altogether good place to raise our children.



Community Spirit

Our collective community consists of friendly, well-informed people who feel they can make a difference, have an impact in determining their future and their quality of life, and enjoy their freedom of expression.

Community Appearance

The town we envision has a defined sense of place as expressed in its history and architecture.

Community Services

The town of our vision has high-quality education, and medical and emergency response services, as well as quality, efficient, and well maintained parks and public buildings. The town's public servants exhibit an excellent level of public service, including approachability, honesty and helpfulness. Our town government and community leaders demonstrate accountability, consistency and visibility. We engage in a high level of cooperation with surrounding governmental and nongovernmental entities.

Environment

We desire a community where urban, rural and agricultural land uses can coexist in a well-planned pattern. Land use decisions are made with thoughtfulness and an eye toward sustainability. We want a healthy community with clean air and water.

Economy

We envision a community in which all citizens enjoy financial prosperity and can find an affordable place to live. The town has a bustling downtown community core with abundant and diverse retail establishments. We continually strive for economic diversity within the community. Our town government is economically stable and viable.

Key Outcome Areas

Outcome areas are defined as specific objectives that the Board of Trustees and the community would like to achieve, and that contribute to the quality of life for Buena Vista citizens. Enhancing Economic Vitality, Infrastructure, Community, Environment and Water are important priorities of the Town of Buena Vista. Each outcome area is defined below:

Economic Vitality

We want to increase long-term prosperity for Buena Vista citizens in a manner that encourages sustainability, smart growth, diversification, capitalizes on our strengths, and improves quality of life.

Infrastructure

We want to ensure that we maintain existing infrastructure prior to considering new infrastructure.

Community

We want to create a community with a sense of pride and acceptance where all contribute to the social, economic, and political life, take part in prosperity, and feel respected and safe.

Environment

We want to create an environment that is safe, healthy, encourages conservation, and makes for a friendly place where people want to live, work, and play.

Water

We want a safe and reliable water supply that comes from diverse sources, and meets the needs of residents and business - now and in the future.



Challenges and Opportunities

Buena Vista is a community endowed with significant natural resources. The Arkansas River provides recreational boating experiences of all sorts. The mountains of the Sawatch Range provide vistas and opportunities for motorized and non-motorized trail recreation. There is arable land for farming and ranching, and water in abundance. The historic downtown has many fine examples of late nineteenth-century architecture. It is no wonder that Buena Vista has established a strong tourism sector and is attracting new residents from the Front Range and beyond.

Yet this is a community that is not without challenges. Tourism is generally limited to the summer season, making it difficult to sustain year-round retail. New residents and tourists can bid up the cost of housing, making housing affordability a significant problem. The goals and interests of younger residents often compete with the established older community. Providing for bicycles and pedestrians may be seen as conflicting with automobile access, particularly in the downtown area. Finally, many people pass through Buena Vista on Highway 24 without realizing the potential for a longer stay, creating an imbalance between the highway corridor and the historic Main Street.

How can these problems be addressed, while maintaining the two most important goals expressed in the Comprehensive Plan process: maintaining Buena Vista's small-town character and offering a family-friendly community? Is there a single "Big Idea" that can connect the dots between maintaining these characteristics while providing for new residents and the challenges of economic development?

We believe that idea comes in the form of communication and collaboration. At several public meetings on the Comprehensive Plan update, residents expressed strongly divergent views about their government, taxes, development, bicycle lanes, even streetscape improvements. But when residents came together over community maps in design charrette sessions, there was a clear consensus on the need for affordable housing, better facilities for senior citizens, sidewalks and bike lanes, and, yes, even streetscape improvements. As the economic data points out, Buena Vista has shown great resilience in weathering and rebounding from economic downturns. That same resilience can be found in a willingness to come together over issues and determine a course of action that will lead the community into the future.



The 2015 Comprehensive Plan

This Comprehensive Plan, an update of the 2008 document, is a product of those ideas and values that were expressed in community meetings. While not everyone was in agreement regarding the specifics, it was clear that the process of coming together has great value. Communication and collaboration remain the Big Idea that will move Buena Vista forward.

While a Comprehensive Plan has technical requirements that form the basis for Land Use Code changes and community investment, the Plan has been written in plain language to incorporate the ideas expressed in a number of community meetings, polls, questionnaires, the design charrette, and social media. In these efforts, members of the community came together to discuss their key issues and ideas.

The emerging community vision remains one of a smaller community, where people care deeply about one another, are aware of their history and heritage, and are willing to embrace the future with new initiatives. Tourism is, and will remain, an important part of Buena Vista's character and

economic base. However, tourism will be balanced by a need to support the local community, providing for young people, growing families, and senior citizens.

Buena Vista will offer the kind of development that supports all of these groups, and will continue to come together to address its needs in a collaborative process. New initiatives will improve the sidewalks and trails, housing availability, awareness of and protection for historic resources, attract new retail to East Main Street, and develop a sustainable and resilient year-round economy. These important Goals and associated Action Items are further detailed in the various sections of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, which we hope will be shared and discussed by every citizen of the community.

Use of this Plan

This Comprehensive Plan is an officially adopted advisory document that outlines the community goals for the future. It provides direction for elected and appointed officials in making choices regarding the long-range planning needs of the community. It provides guidance in adopting Zoning Regulations, as well as other legislative acts such as annexation and subdivision. This Comprehensive Plan is an update of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan provided a number of Goals, Policies, and Action Items that are still valid and have been carried forward into this plan. In some circumstances, these Goals, Policies, and Action Items have been revised to reflect current changes in the community.

The 2015 Comprehensive Plan is both an aspirational document and a statement of land use policy to be adopted by the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Town Board of Trustees. This Comprehensive Plan is intended to be used in conjunction with other plans and documents. These include:

- The Recreation Facilities Master Plan, Revised 2010
- The 2013 Buena Vista Downtown Colorado Inc. (DCI) Assessment
- The 2014 CDOT US 24 Access Control Plan
- The 2014 Water Resources Master Plan
- The Buena Vista Community Trails Plan, Revised 2014
- The 2015 Buena Vista Town Works document
- The 2016 Airport Master Plan

The Buena Vista Community has a tradition of planning activity that has resulted in a number of interim planning documents and assessments. Perhaps the most important subsequent effort to any comprehensive plan is to update the Land Use Code. The Land Use Code for a community contains the zoning regulations and other regulations relating to land use. It should not be confused with the Comprehensive Plan, which provides the framework for land use decisions but does not in itself establish detailed regulations. Therefore, amendments to the Town's Land Use Code will be necessary to effectively implement the strategies identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan may be amended to respond to changed conditions, as may be determined by the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Board of Trustees. Typically, comprehensive plans receive a major update every five to ten years to respond to new development and changes in community aspirations. This plan was the result of extensive community outreach. It is recommended that any amendments should also benefit from significant public participation efforts.





Chapter 2

COMMUNITY CHANGES & PROJECTIONS



Community Changes and Projections

A comprehensive plan articulates community development policies and defines where and in what manner (shape, scale, conditions, and locations) future development should occur. The plan should be grounded in economic and fiscal realities, but also be aspirational in terms of where and how the community hopes to grow. Plan adoption is often followed, as it is in this instance, by a revision of the Town's Land Use Code, ensuring that community regulations reflect community aspirations.

This section describes current economic realities. It provides insights into recent growth trends and community finances as a baseline and context to the plan detail in the following sections.

Buena Vista and Chaffee County Economy

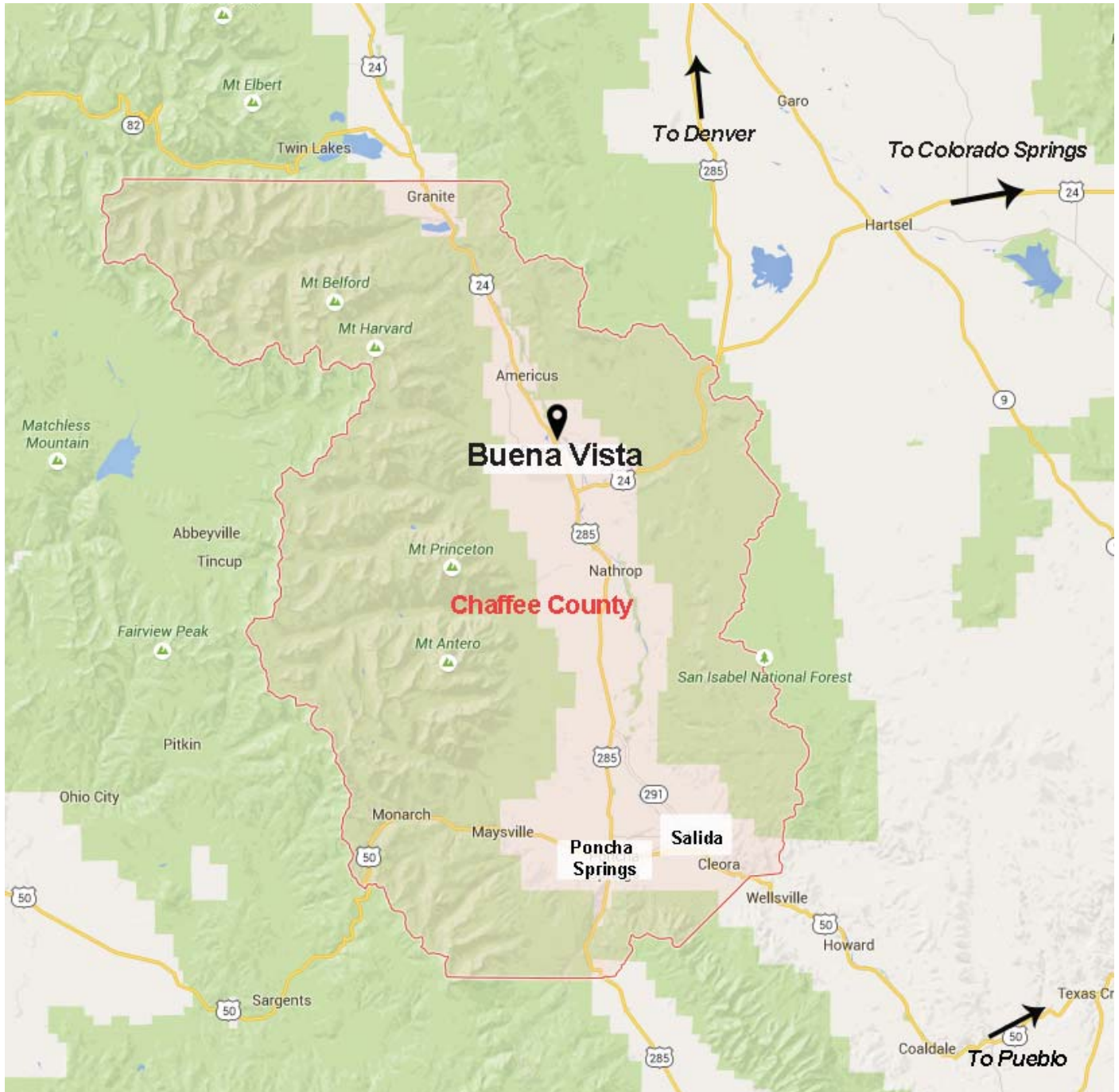
Originally founded as a mining and agricultural supply town centered on the railroad, Buena Vista's current economy like many Colorado mountain communities has shifted towards tourism, recreation, and quality of life attractions. The Town is fortuitously situated at the base of the Collegiate Peaks and adjacent to the Arkansas River. Colorado State Highway 24, a significant north/south highway, passes through the commercial core of the community bringing a consistent but seasonal flow of business and tourist travelers.



Location

Figure 1 shows the Town of Buena Vista in relationship to its neighboring communities and the highway network that connects the region.

Figure 1. Buena Vista, Chaffee County and the Surrounding Region



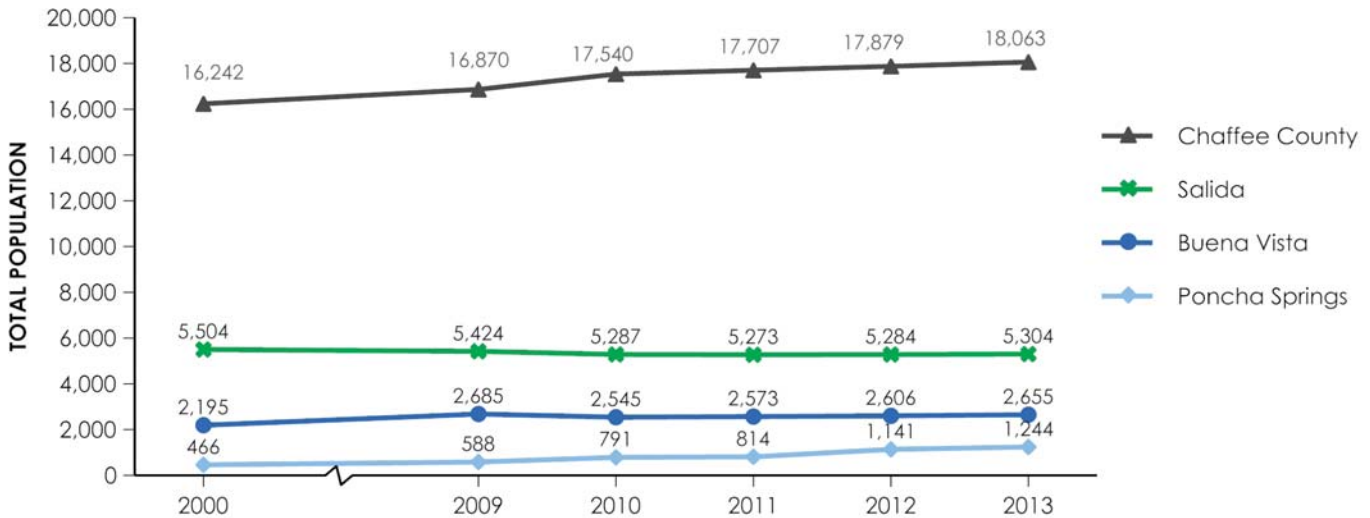
Source: Google Maps; BBC Research & Consulting.

In addition to Buena Vista, Chaffee County includes the City of Salida and the Town of Poncha Springs.

Population trends

Figure 2 shows Chaffee County population growth, and growth in the County's three incorporated areas. Chaffee County has witnessed slow growth over the past 13 years and continued growth during the recent economic downturn.

Figure 2. Population Growth, Chaffee County, Salida, Buena Vista, and Poncha Springs, 2000 – 2013



Source: 2000 U.S. Census; ACS 5-Year Estimates (2009-2013); BBC Research & Consulting.

Buena Vista's current population (2015) is about 2,700 persons with some seasonal additions during the summer months. Town growth was very modest during the economic downturn but more recent information (e.g. building activity, home sales, and reported rental shortages) suggests continued, and perhaps accelerated, population growth in the past year.

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan and Water Resources Master Plan (2014) utilized an annual town growth rate of 1.2 percent, based on historical population growth. The most recent population data shows the town grew at an average annual rate of 1.4 percent between 2010 and 2013, a period which includes a recovering economy. This plan anticipates a 1.3 percent annual growth rate while acknowledging uncertainty surrounding the national economy and the strength of the current economic recovery. As a reference, the State Demography Office projects an annual growth rate of 2.1 percent for Chaffee County between 2015 and 2030. Buena Vista's projected population is about 3,300 residents in 2030.

Figure 3. Buena Vista Projected Population

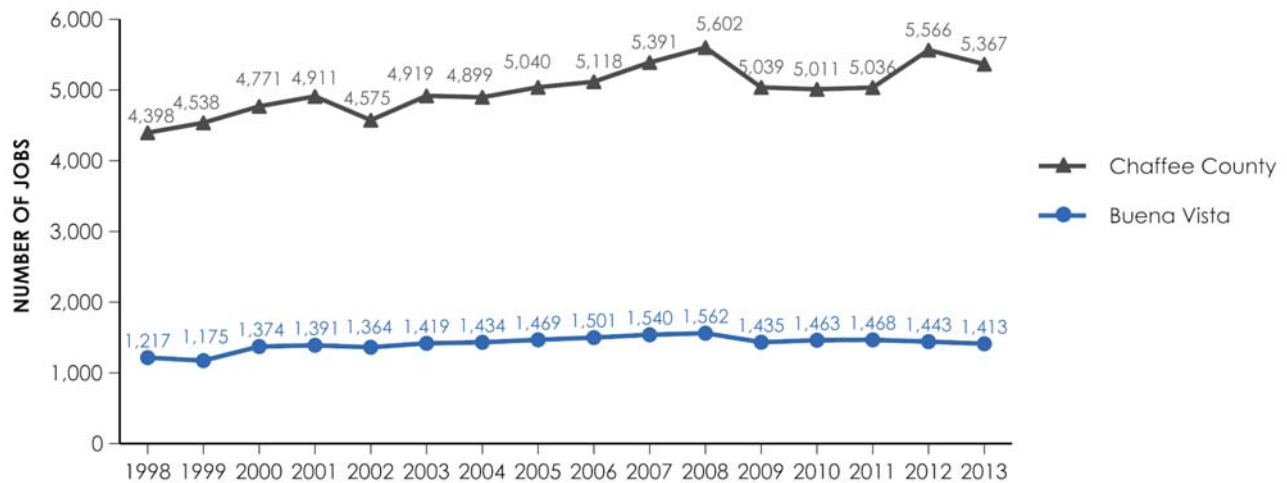
Year	Projected Population
2013 (Actual)	2,655
2015	2,724
2020	2,906
2025	3,100
2030	3,307

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimate (2013); Town of Buena Vista 2008 Comprehensive Plan; Town of Buena Vista Water Resources Master Plan (2014); Colorado Department of Local Affairs, State Demography Office; BBC Research & Consulting.

Employment

Figure 4 shows employment growth in both Buena Vista and Chaffee County between 1998 and 2013. The effects of the economic downturn are evidenced after 2008. Buena Vista experienced virtually no overall employment growth between 2003 and 2013.

Figure 4. Number of Jobs, Buena Vista, and Chaffee County, 1998 – 2013



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Zip Code Business Patterns (1998-2013); BBC Research & Consulting.

Community meetings and focus group interviews during the course of this plan development report employers struggling to find seasonal workers and rising housing rental rates with declining unit availability, all supporting a widely held view that the economy has rebounded considerably in the last 12-18 months.

Employment by category

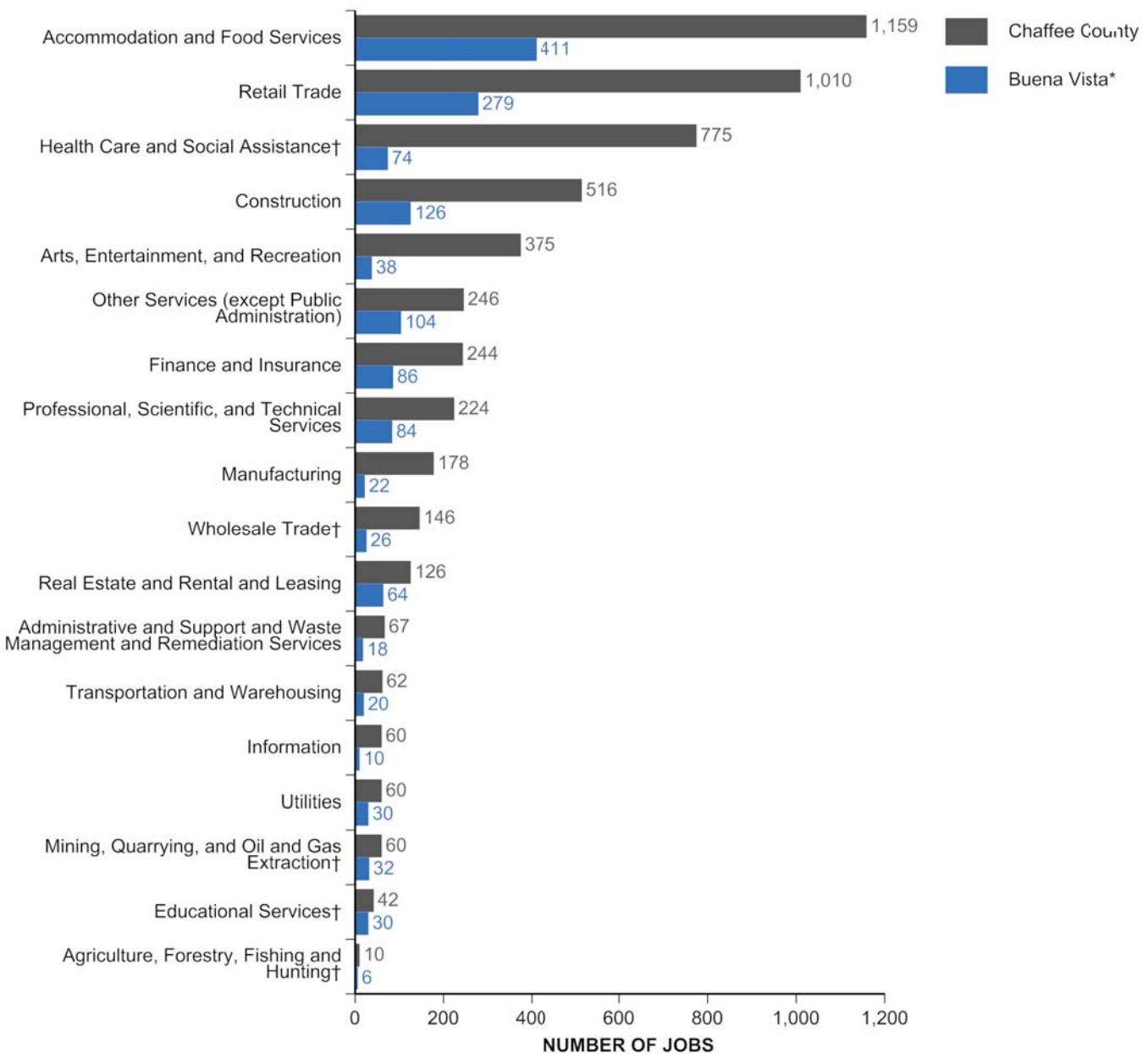
The Chaffee County economy is dominated by tourism, visitor services, and retail trade related jobs. Health care is a major employment source, but less of an influence in Buena Vista than in other parts of the county.

The Chaffee County tourism economy has multiple basic components, including pass through summer visitors, locally lodged overnight guests—including second home owners—and persons drawn to the area's multiple fairs and events. The rafting industry, Monarch Ski Area and the Mount Princeton Hot Springs Resort are major employers and important visitor draws.

In addition to tourism, the Buena Vista economy is supported by a significant retiree community, the Buena Vista Correctional Complex, and the provision of regional services in education, health care, and agriculture.

Figure 5. Number of Jobs by Industry, Chaffee County, and Buena Vista, 2013

Note: Estimates were not presented, rather an employment range. Midpoint values were used in the Figure 5.

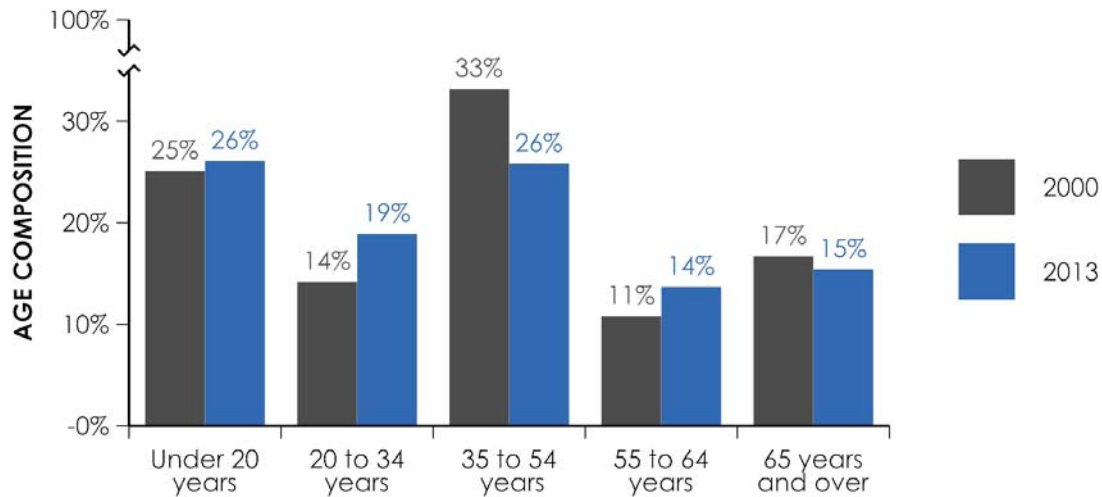


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Zip Code Business Patterns (1998-2013); BBC Research & Consulting.

Demography

As noted below there has been a modest shift in the Buena Vista population with a larger share of younger residents. This demographic trend is likely tied to increased ease of telecommuting/remote working, and Buena Vista's quality of life and recreational opportunities in the surrounding area.

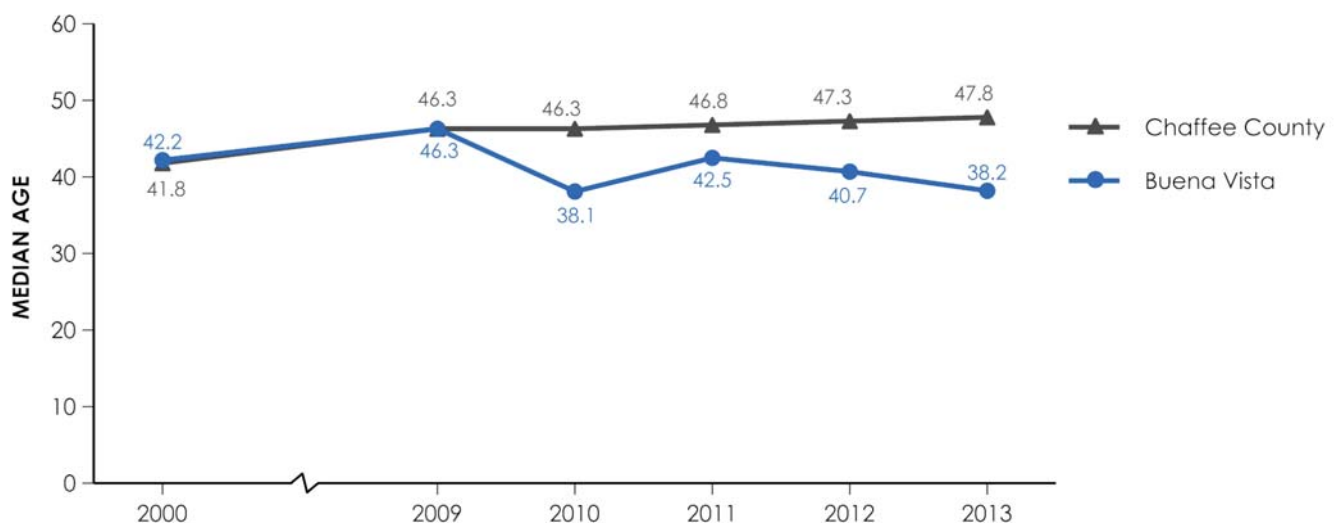
Figure 6. Buena Vista Age Composition, 2000 and 2013



Source: 2000 U.S. Census; ACS 5-Year Estimate (2013); BBC Research & Consulting.

As evidenced in Figure 7, Buena Vista's population median age is increasingly younger than the county as a whole.

Figure 7. Median Age, Buena Vista, and Chaffee County, 2000 – 2013



Source: 2000 U.S. Census; ACS 5-Year Estimate (2009-2013); BBC Research & Consulting.

Retail sales

Additional insight into the local economy, particularly the influence of tourism, can be gleaned from trends in retail sales and property assessed valuation. Figure 8 shows twelve year trends in Buena Vista retail sales tax receipts. The absence of a significant downturn during the 2007-2013 recession is notable. Buena Vista's sales tax receipts increased by over 10 percent between 2013 and 2014, the largest annual increase observed in the analyzed time period—signaling a strong and healthy retail sector.

Figure 8. Buena Vista Annual Town Sales Tax Receipts, 2003 – 2014



Source: Town of Buena Vista; BBC Research & Consulting.

Figure 9 shows the monthly pattern of retail sales over the course of an individual fiscal year and thus the importance of summer tourism to the local economy. Also apparent in the figure is the increase in sales tax receipts between the current year (2014-2015) and the year prior. A comparison between these two years over the same time period (October through April) reveals a net sales tax receipt increase of about \$54,000.

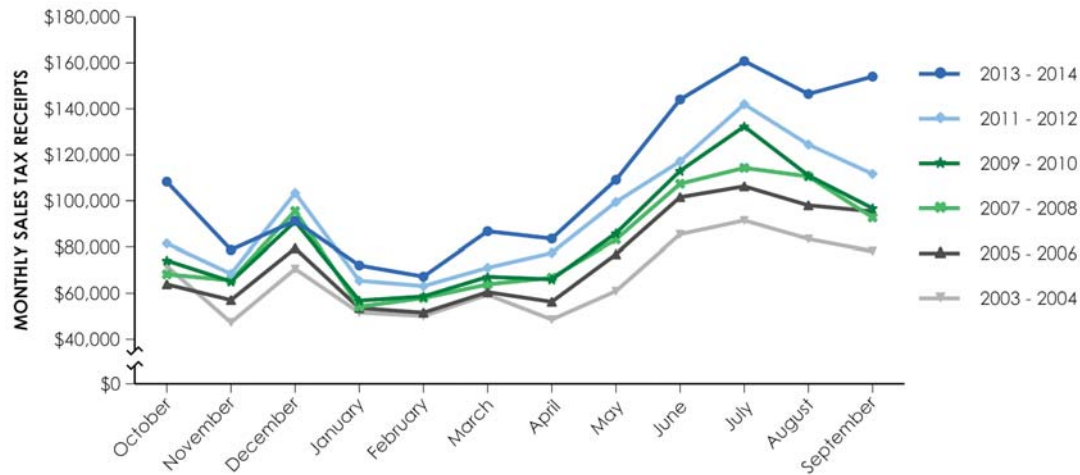
Figure 9. Buena Vista Recent Monthly Sales Tax Receipts



Source: Town of Buena Vista; BBC Research & Consulting.

Figure 10 shows the same monthly data over a ten year period (data is shown for every other year) demonstrating that summer activity has dominated the economy for many years and seasonal patterns have not changed dramatically. The data from summer 2014 shows particularly strong retail sales, and given the strong start observed in 2015 (see figure 9), as well as feedback received from community members, summer 2015 sales tax receipts are likely to eclipse those of prior years.

Figure 10. Buena Vista Sales Tax Receipts, 2003-2014 (Every other year presented)



Source: Town of Buena Vista; BBC Research & Consulting.

Data on assessed valuation, shown in Figure 11, is a strong indicator for real estate values in general and suggests declining values in recent years. Preliminary assessed values for 2015 indicate the first significant value upturn in five years. It should be noted that assessed values reflect the prior year's market values, thus any recent market upturn will not be reflected until 2016.

Figure 11. Assessed Valuation, Buena Vista, 2004 – 2014



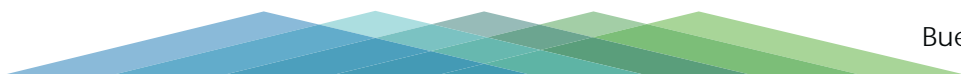
Source: Chaffee County, Assessor's Office; BBC Research & Consulting.

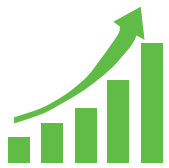
Conclusions

By most measures, Buena Vista and Chaffee County have shown steady but slow growth, only moderately interrupted by the national recession. Sales tax data, as well as information from surveys and community meetings held as a part of the comprehensive planning process, suggest a strengthening economy, mostly expressed in rising home rental rates, reported labor shortages, and growth in retail trade and services. Summer tourism, which has been very strong in Colorado in general, continues to grow year after year in Buena Vista (evident in sales tax collection data) solidifying its importance in the local economy—early indicators suggest that summer 2015 has been a strong season for tourist activity and spending.

Town and county retail sales tax data show annual year over year growth since 2009. Anecdotally, Realtors report increased demand for well situated second homes and a notable absence of for-sale or for-rent inventory in lower priced units in any location. The county's close proximity to Denver and Colorado Springs has become a stronger selling point. Interstate 70 congestion west of Denver encourages second home buyers to pursue other mountain access options. Interviewees expressed concerns about a shortage of semi-skilled workers, particularly seasonal employees faced with limited housing options. Skilled construction trades are also reportedly scarce.







Chapter 3

DEVELOPING THE ECONOMY



Economic Observations

A slowly improving local economy is an encouraging trend, but the community engagement process identified a number of economic issues that represent wide spread concerns.

- There are fundamental economic limitations that come with a tourism-based economy:
 - Reliance on seasonal, transitory, and low-paying service jobs;
 - Retaining high school graduates and young people who might want to stay in the area, but are inhibited by lack of advancement opportunities, and affordable housing;
 - Challenging and volatile business environment for local entrepreneurs.
- There is a lack of year-round employment:
 - Buena Vista has very few non-tourism jobs that might provide stable year-round wages.
 - Regardless of the Town's attractive qualities, its isolation from markets and small population base makes attraction of new businesses very difficult.
- There is a growing imbalance between housing prices and local wage/salary scales:
 - Lower priced housing has largely been absorbed in the past two years;
 - Rental rates have risen and short term vacancy is near zero as the summer season begins;
 - Services like VRBO and AirBNB absorb some rental units that might otherwise be sold or added to the long term rental pool.
- There is a desire for more diverse retail offerings targeting local residents and a desire to see East Main Street retail develop and prosper as part of a mixed use/historic downtown.
- Some residents see an opportunity for developing sports camps and recreation events that take advantage of the area's weather and attractions, and its proximity to the Front Range markets.
- There is concern in some quarters that a growing tourism economy, coupled with second home owner influences, has the potential to undermine the essential small town character of

Buena Vista and create the same economic imbalances that are straining many Colorado mountain resort communities.

- The South Main mixed use project demonstrates that interesting design and housing diversity can attract a broader market for Buena Vista residential and commercial development. The continued development and maturation of South Main is a valuable element of the Town's overall economic development strategy.
- Highway 24 commercial is still the retail engine that produces sales tax and supports the fiscal wellbeing of the community. The comprehensive plan attempts to ensure that the highway retail is attractive to pass-by travelers and communicates that Buena Vista is an interesting place, suitable for exploration or simply a rest stop. One economic goal of this plan is to make Buena Vista "stickier," attracting and holding guests for longer stays. This implies the need for improved signage, parking, landscape, and building standards.
- Under the same "make it stickier" strategy, the East Main historic district needs better visitor recognition and would benefit from improved entryway and signage to lure visitors off the highway.
- The business center adjacent to the Buena Vista airport has sufficient infrastructure and land capacity to accept additional industrial, manufacturing, or commercial growth. Buena Vista has the capacity to accommodate year-round employers, but the Town's size, limited workforce, and relative isolation are significant competitive limitations. Working collectively with the Chaffee County Economic Development Corporation while ensuring that Buena Vista has reasonable development regulations and appropriate property for new development should remain a key element of the community's economic development strategy.

Fiscal Observations

The Town of Buena Vista funds general public services by way of a \$3.0 million general fund, supported principally by sales tax (70% of general fund receipts), property tax (7.89 mill levy), and various franchise fees, charges for services and state redistribution funds. General fund revenues are expected to grow 8% in 2015. The Town also has a capital improvement fund, supported by a .5% dedicated sales tax, which generates about \$325,000 per year, approximately



½ of which is used to retire an existing street improvement bond. The Town has been quite successful in attracting state highway funds and grant money, and periodically transfers some general fund money to complete authorized street improvements.

Buena Vista has two self-funded enterprise funds: The Airport Enterprise Fund supports the operation of the Central Colorado Regional Airport (KAJ), and the Buena Vista Water Fund, supplies municipal water. The Town's general aviation airport is supported by taxes on fuel sales and state and federal grants. Observations regarding the Town's fiscal position relative to land use decisions include:

- With roughly 2,700 people in about 1,500 households and a \$3.0 million general fund budget (spending of about \$2,000 per household), the Town is operating at a typical spending level for a small Colorado mountain community.
- In general, the Town's revenue generation profile, expenditures, and fund allocation practices are similar to those of other communities with similar size and rural character. The dedicated

capital improvement tax, which was established by citizen vote in 2012, ensures that Town facilities are appropriately maintained and reflects the community's willingness to invest in the Town's future. The Town has recently adopted a 5 year capital improvements plan.

- Chaffee County has an unusual tax rebating practice by which a share of county sales tax collections are rebated to local communities based on the location of automobile registrations rather than point of retail sales. This helps fund residential services and reduces the Town's reliance on locally generated retail sales.
- The Town currently employs all the revenue raising mechanisms afforded statutory municipal governments. The Town could consider special improvement districts, where taxation is applied very specifically on benefited properties, but the small scale and small tax base of any prospective district is a practical limit in such an application. Public private partnerships or similar cost/tax sharing efforts usually require a major tax generator in order to support tax sharing. There does not appear to be a suitable location or situation where relatively expensive and controversial urban renewal districts might be employed. Raising taxes is not supported. The Town will likely rely on its existing tax base and tax structure to fund improvements.
- Unless additional funds are found, affordable housing support will come from land use flexibility and density rewards defined in the Land Use Code, which can provide effective financial incentives for stimulating lower cost housing.

Although challenges are notable, most residents see recent growth as a very positive sign and express optimism that Buena Vista is well positioned to evolve in a positive and constructive manner. There is wide recognition that Buena Vista's greatest economic asset is largely the character of the community and that supporting and nurturing the character of this community may also be the community's most effective economic development strategy.

Goals, Policies, and Action Items

Goal 1: Buena Vista desires to maintain, expand, and promote local businesses and entrepreneurs.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will ensure that an adequate amount of commercially-zoned land exists to accommodate new businesses, and that new commercial development responds to a developing community image.

Action Items:

- Buena Vista will continue to partner with the Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Program committees, Chaffee County Economic Development Corp., and review recommendations in the 2013 Downtown Colorado Inc. *Downtown Community Assessment*.
- Buena Vista will develop commercial design standards in the Land Use Code applicable to appropriate zone districts, including the Highway 24 corridor and downtown core, to ensure that commercial development complements and promotes the Town's desired image.
- Buena Vista will review current home occupation provisions in the Land Use Code to ensure that these provisions are sufficiently business-friendly while, at the same time, offering adequate protection to ensure that residential neighborhoods are not unduly impacted by home businesses.



Goal 2: Buena Vista will support and expand the role of tourism and tourist-related business in the local economy.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will continue to support efforts of the Main Street Program Economic Restructuring Committee and the Chaffee County Economic Development Corporation.

Action Items:

- Buena Vista will continue to support and promote whitewater-related tourism.
- Review provisions in the Land Use Code and provide educational materials to facilitate code compliance for new businesses.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will attempt to attract and support businesses with the potential to increase tourism activity during the shoulder or winter seasons.

Action Item:

- The Town will seek to identify and include year-round recreational opportunities to support businesses in town.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will promote and preserve existing and improved air access to the community via the Central Colorado Regional Airport.

Action Items:

- Review and implement recommendations of the Airport Master Plan currently in progress.
- Implement the recently approved airport business plan that will ensure the long-range success of the airport facility.
- Identify and promote appropriate uses at the Airport Business Park that will promote airport use and general economic development.

Goal 3: Buena Vista will continue to provide community assets and a community environment conducive to attracting and retaining families.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will support and develop recreational opportunities that are family-oriented.

Action Items:

- Buena Vista will work with its Recreation Advisory Board and staff of the Department of Parks and Recreation to develop recreational programs for families and local residents.
- Implement the 2014 Trails Master Plan recommendations.
- Evaluate the recommendations of a feasibility study currently in progress for a Recreation and Events Center that would include additional community amenities, if feasible.
- Develop recreational programs and facilities that complement the activities of the School District.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will continue support for the School District, noted for its quality and performance, as an important economic driver for attracting families and new businesses.

Action Items:

- Work with the School District to develop an affordable housing program to attract and retain high-quality teachers.



- Review the current fee-in-lieu schedule with the intention of increasing the fees for new market-rate residential development.
- Work with the School District to acquire grant funding to restore the old gymnasium behind the Courthouse as a community events and gathering place.
- Work with the School District to identify an appropriate location for a new high school facility, and to the extent permissible, support a ballot issue for its construction. Note: During public participation activities, there was considerable discussion as to whether a new high school should be located in the current high school location. The current location would promote convenient accessibility. Relocation to the outskirts of town could provide more land for expanded facilities, but would require more extensive infrastructure and transportation activity.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will continue to support the higher education facilities provided by the Colorado Mountain College (CMC) as an important economic driver in the community.

Action Items:

- Work with CMC to develop and enhance programs that support attracting new businesses and promoting skills for qualified employees.
- Recognize CMC for its role as the third least expensive college provider in the United States, for its “concurrent enrollment” program that guarantees acceptance at Colorado colleges, and for its keeping higher education more affordable.

Goal 4: Buena Vista will support the continuing development of businesses that provide products and services for day-to-day shopping needs.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will encourage the development of activities that return significant out-of-area income and provide products and services for local residents.

Action Items:

- Support activities to host special events and conferences in Buena Vista.
- Facilitate pop-up retail in vacant storefront locations.
- Consider providing additional mixed-use districts and revise mixed-use provisions in the Land Use Code for the Old-Town Zone Overlay to allow for easier installation of mixed uses.

- **Policy:** Tax increment financing, bonding for infrastructure improvements, waiving of impact fees, and special districts may be appropriate mechanisms for new commercial development.

Action Items:

- Work with the Downtown Revitalization Group for the possible formation of a Downtown Development Authority (DDA).
- Work with the Main Street Board to form a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and otherwise implement recommendations of the Downtown Colorado Inc. study for downtown.
- Consider implementing a Recapture and Assessment program for commercial and residential development located in areas that lack infrastructure.
- Set up a business support network which would provide guidance for new businesses on the Land Use Code requirements and other regulatory processes.

- **Policy:** Development should generally pay its own way, except for particularly desired affordable housing, commercial, infill, or connectivity improvements.

Action Item:

- Develop general guidelines for desired development that would require Town expenditure for infrastructure.



- **Policy:** Where feasible, all future municipal office buildings will be located on or adjacent to East Main Street. Other public entities, including state, local, and non-profit facilities, will be encouraged to locate or maintain offices on or adjacent to East Main Street.

Action Items:

- Study the development of a new Civic Center building to be located on East Main Street.
- Continue to study the Civic Center project as a valuable community facility and key entry element to the historic downtown.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will participate in efforts to revitalize East Main Street.

Action Items:

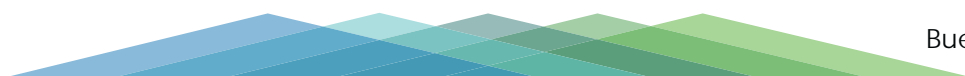
- Continue reviewing potential infrastructure, amenity, and beautification efforts for Main Street, including bicycle racks, other street furniture, and enhanced landscaping.
- Improve public outreach so that citizens understand the value and importance of streetscape improvements for the overall economic vitality of the East Main Street corridor and the historic downtown.
- Work with the railroad ownership to develop a plan for the permanent and attractive installation of parking facilities on the railroad right-of-way adjacent to East Main Street.

- **Policy:** Promote tourist use of the historic downtown by directing pass through traffic from Highway 24 to East Main Street.

Action Items:

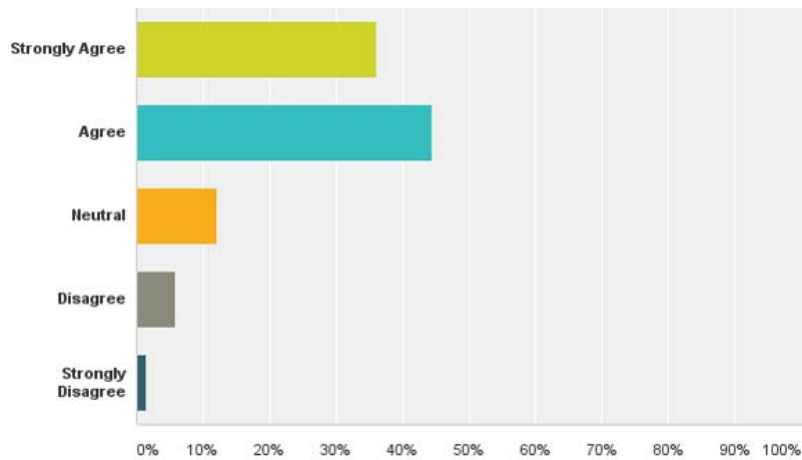
- Review implementation of the Colorado Department of Transportation *Access Control Plan* to ensure that specific attention is given to enhanced accessibility to East Main Street.
- Continue to pursue the Civic Center project as a gateway to the historic downtown.
- Implement the recommendations of the wayfinding and branding project currently in progress.

- **Policy:** Support the development of workforce housing to incentivize good employees relocating to and remaining in Buena Vista (see Chapter 4).

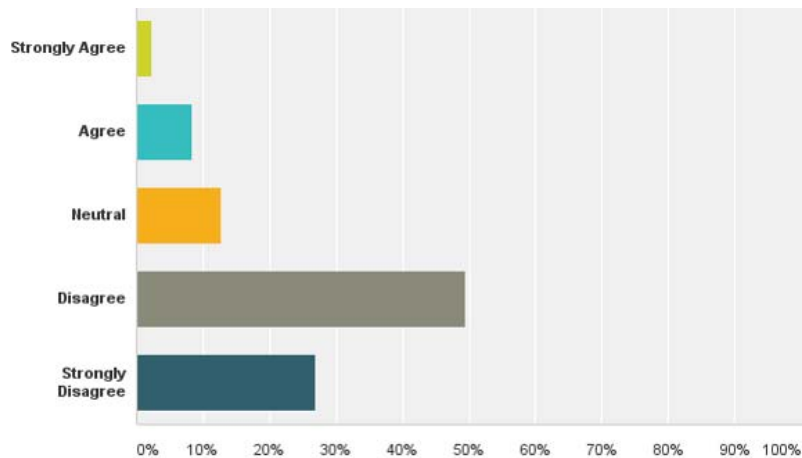


The graphs below reflect community voting on key issues during the Comprehensive Plan public participation process:

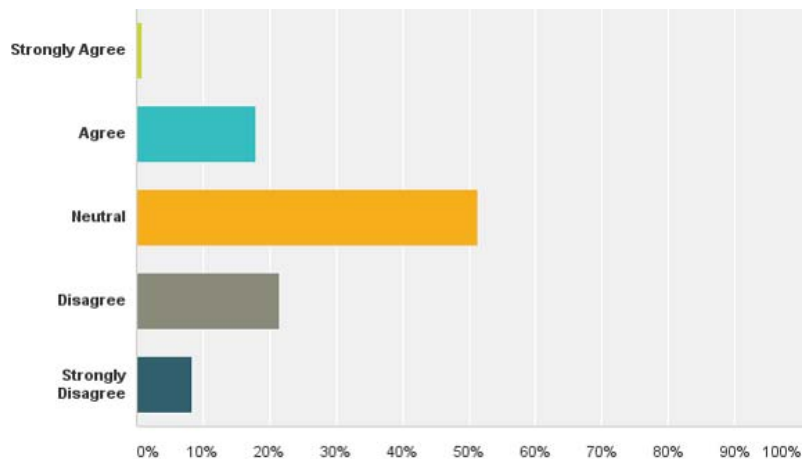
Question 12: Buena Vista needs to develop a more year-round economy.

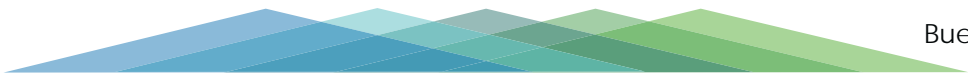


Question 15: There are enough good jobs in Buena Vista to support a family.



Question 18: Adequate support and information for new businesses is available in Buena Vista







Chapter 4

HOUSING: ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE & AESTHETIC



Overview

Housing affordability and accessibility are central concerns to the residents of Buena Vista. New housing development, both free-market and affordable, is supported by the community and has been recognized as an important factor in ensuring a vibrant future for Buena Vista. In fact, addressing housing affordability was identified as one of the most pressing needs in Buena Vista, ahead of popular community initiatives such as the creation of a recreation center, and trailing only the need to attract new businesses and jobs. Workforce or affordable housing can be defined as housing that is targeted to attract and retain “essential workers” in a community. Affordability is seen as the relationship between income and housing costs.

Income for affordable housing residents is often restricted to 30-120% of the area median income or AMI, with total housing costs equaling no more than 30% of annual income. Typically, affordable or workforce housing is located in or near employment centers. It can include single-family, multi-family, owner occupied or rentals, and mixed use units. Affordable or workforce housing can be made lower cost by government subsidies for infrastructure development, writing down the cost of land, or through exactions imposed on market-rate development, among other strategies.

Vision

Whether a young family, looking to put down roots, a single professional looking for an outdoor oriented lifestyle, or a retired individual, looking for a residence that meets their financial, physical, and social needs, a wide range of housing types should be provided that is attainable and desirable. South Main is





an important example of introducing new housing types that may offer a good model for future development.

Local government has discussed options of how to ensure affordable housing is provided. Of the options discussed, most support has been voiced for revising the Land Use Code to include affordable housing policies. These policies include the concept of inclusionary zoning which requires developers to provide actual affordable housing when new development is built, pay fees, or provide land for the construction of affordable housing.

The Land Use Code should also allow that more affordable housing can be built throughout the Town of Buena Vista through changes to density parameters, dimensional standards, and allowing a broader range of housing types that will ensure affordable housing projects are viable for developers.

Finally, the Land Use Code should contain incentives to developers to build affordable housing such as fee waivers, density bonuses, expedited review, etc., and should contain provisions for their long-term status as affordable housing to prevent conversion to market rate units.

Outreach and education of the community should be pursued to ensure broad community support for affordable housing programs. Collaboration with the Arkansas Valley Council of Governments and Chaffee County to adopt a county-wide funding mechanism as well as housing authority functions should also be pursued.

Why Is Housing Important?

Many people in the community report they cannot find housing that they like or that they can afford. This lack of housing options has a negative impact on the efforts to diversify Buena Vista's economy. If the economy is to expand beyond primarily being a tourist dominated economy, as the community desires, new housing stock should be provided to attract new companies to relocate to Buena Vista. The lack of affordable housing can be seen as an economic development bottleneck for the community.

New housing options will also ensure that potential and current residents can find housing that suits their needs and provides certainty that they can call Buena Vista home for many years to come.

Finally, more housing options will build a critical mass of local residents sufficient to support a year round economy.

What Type of Housing Is Needed?

A wide variety of housing options are supported by the community and should be explored. These range from emerging concepts such as tiny houses and live/work opportunities to more traditional housing such as continuum of care/ senior housing, accessory dwelling units, and multi-family housing developments. Various forms of subsidy and municipal support for affordable housing appear to be of interest to the community.



Encouraging greater housing density in certain locations was acceptable to most citizens responding to polls, and would avoid the need to annex significant amounts of additional land. Greater density will also focus development where cost-effective infrastructure improvements can be provided in an efficient manner, such as in the neighborhoods adjacent to East Main.

Addressing Potential Issues

The development of new housing has the potential to be a polarizing topic for the community. Buena Vista can review existing development to determine what has and has not served the needs of the community. New neighborhoods, while important for the amenities and vitality they can provide, should offer a design approach that is compatible with the existing character of Buena Vista.

Affordable housing should be located on vacant or underutilized lands, developed alongside commercial and office uses, and within existing neighborhoods to foster community integration and vitality. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) should be considered as a good alternative for adding additional density to existing residential properties, and should have a minimal and efficient review process.

Incentives for constructing Affordable Housing should be provided in the Land Use Code and through other mechanisms, such as reduced fees, to ensure housing is actually built. The Land Use Code should provide zoning that would allow affordable housing to be integrated into the fabric of the community. To provide consistency and manage expectations of the community, specific design standards should be made a part of the Land Use Code update. These standards, which establish neighborhood scale and character, and ensure walkability, will assist in maintaining a desirable and accepted community appearance.

The local government should continue to pursue education and enforcement of standards to dispel the negative associations often attached to affordable housing, and ensure that community character and opinions are respected. Local government should identify potential roadblocks to providing affordable housing and adopt appropriate policies that remove these potential roadblocks.

Existing community initiatives and groups working on the questions of providing affordable housing should be engaged and their efforts folded into any new efforts. The relationships built with nonprofit housing organizations should be fostered and actively managed. Collaboration with Chaffee County and other communities in the County can further develop funding mechanisms, as well as establishing a Housing Authority to administer affordable housing.



Goals, Policies, and Action Items

Goal 1: Buena Vista will promote the development of a range of housing opportunities and choices.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will pursue a growth strategy which is supported by the community that includes inclusionary zoning, enforcement of development standards, and a predictable land use review process.
- **Policy:** Regulatory roadblocks shall be identified and overcome by enacting Land Use Code provisions that contain policies supporting the creation of new housing.
- **Policy:** All appropriate methods of creating affordable and acceptable housing, such as tiny houses, accessory dwelling units, multi-family affordable development, senior housing, live/work opportunities, etc. shall be considered and built to respond to specific populations that may find Buena Vista an attractive place to live.

Action Items:

- Ensure consistent enforcement of the Land Use Code.
- Create a streamlined and easy to use Land Use Code.
- Incorporate affordable housing policies in the Land Use Code, including incentives to provide affordable housing.
- Encourage public-private partnerships and clearly define required fees for expansion of infrastructure.
- Create opportunities to educate the community on growth, affordable housing, and planning trends to ensure community support for new housing.
- Establish criteria for Town expenditures for infrastructure in desired locations.
- Prepare an ongoing needs assessment for affordable housing.

Goal 2: Buena Vista will locate new housing within existing neighborhoods.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will promote new housing on underdeveloped and vacant parcels within the downtown core and provide for mixed-uses.

Action Items:

- Establish new zoning districts that encourage mixed-use development, greater density and address affordable housing.
- New planning trends such as tiny homes and live-work units should be implemented.
- Develop dimensional standards that will support in-fill development and neighborhood compatibility.
- Establish a fee and review system that favors re-development and infill development in the commercial core area.
- Remove code barriers on East Main and ensure suitable infrastructure for mixed-use development exists in the core area.



Goal 3: Buena Vista will maintain and enhance the community's overall appearance.

- **Policy:** New housing quality will be governed by building and site design standards in the municipal code which will be informed by the community's values and history.

Action items:

- Urban agriculture and renewable energy should be explored.
- Improve development standards with an emphasis on building design, location, massing, and form.

- **Policy:** The Land Use Code shall contain design standards that establish parameters and community character.

Action items:

- Develop parking standards that will support new development and ensure neighborhood compatibility.
- Update landscaping standards to make them more user-friendly and improve enforcement.

- **Policy:** Land uses shall be compatible with adjacent uses and respect historic properties. Appropriate zone districts should be identified where greater density can be attained.

Action items:

- Support historic preservation efforts and encourage new housing design to respect the design of historical resources (See Chapter 8).

Goal 4: Funding mechanisms and an administrative framework for affordable housing should be created and developed.

- **Policy:** Local government will work with the Upper Arkansas Council of Governments to establish a broad-based housing authority.

Action Items:

- Existing groups working on affordable housing should work with local government initiatives.
- Incentives shall be provided to developers to encourage the development of affordable housing.



Goal 5: Prevent potential displacement of resident housing by tourism uses.

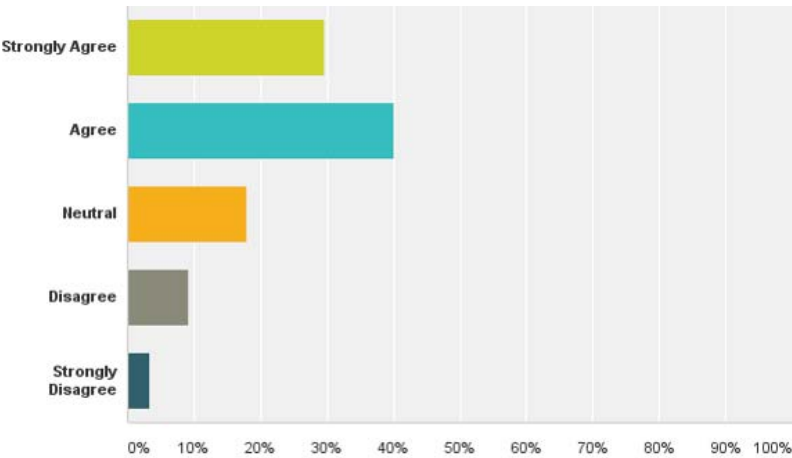
- **Policy:** Housing opportunities, and particularly affordable housing, should not be displaced by tourist rentals.

Action Items:

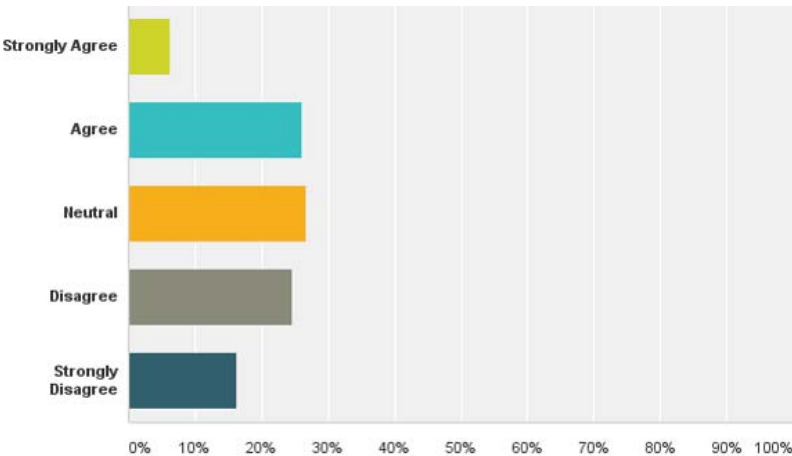
- Conduct an assessment of long term vs. short term private rentals within Buena Vista to determine the degree to which private homes and apartments are listed with rental agencies.
- Update ordinances and Land Use Code provisions licensing private tourist rentals and regulating their use.
- Consider a short-term lodging tax.
- Establish and continually evaluate a threshold or optimal level for short term rentals within the community.

The graphs below reflect community voting on key issues during the Comprehensive Plan public participation process:

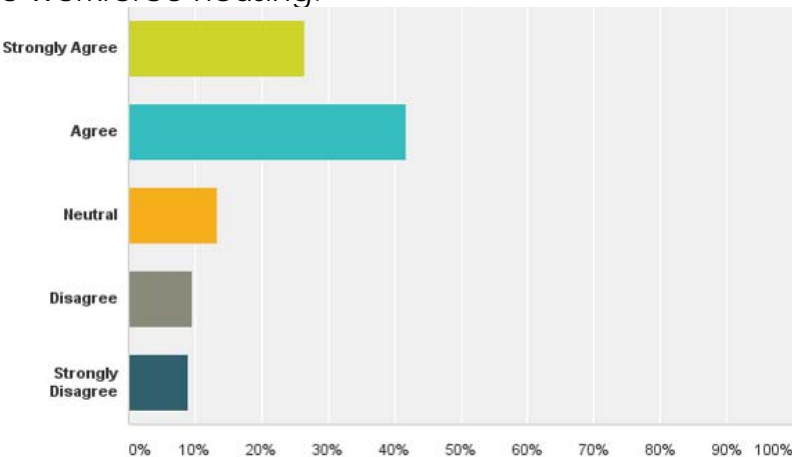
Question 32: Additional housing development is important for the future of Buena Vista.



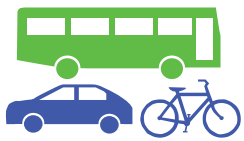
Question 34: I can find housing that I like and that I can afford.



Question 36: Local government should actively encourage the development of affordable workforce housing.







Chapter 5

TRANSPORTATION IN ALL FORMS



Overview

Establishing an approach to the transportation system should be informed by the desire to maintain a small town identity. Part of our small town identity comes from our interactions and relationships we develop living in a community where people know each other. How we get around our community should be a reflection of this ease of interaction. Getting residents and visitors out of their car by encouraging alternative modes of transportation can foster this small town feel while also having a positive effect on community's economy by encouraging window shopping, repeat visitations, and the sense that our community is unique. This will also support environmental stewardship by reducing pollution and encouraging resource conservation. At the same time, the automobile is a reality of modern living and the existing network of streets should be maintained and, where necessary, completed to provide for enhanced connectivity.

Vision

Rather than being known only for the highway commercial district along Highway 24, Buena Vista can be known for its historic Main Street, its quiet and leafy neighborhoods, and its closeness to the natural world by fostering multi-modal transportation options. Safety and ease of use for all transportation types should be primary concerns to ensure this goal is met and alternative modes of transportation are frequently used.

Building on an already strong bicycle community, additional routes and amenities should be pursued, such as plentiful and aesthetic bike racks, which will further encourage biking by making it fun and convenient. The perception that biking is a safe means of transportation should be emphasized. This can be accomplished by providing dedicated bicycle lanes and routes, along with education to inform residents how to use bicycle lanes and "sharrows," which are streets that have been marked as sharing both bicycles and automobiles in the same lane. The importance of bicycles respecting motorized traffic should also be emphasized. Installing a pedestrian/bicycle trail along Cottonwood Creek could provide an important opportunity to foster walking and bike riding, while also creating an enviable amenity for the community.

Safe routes to school should be provided, so that parents can safely allow their children to walk or bike to school on their own.



As a part of providing safe routes to school, improved methods of crossing Highway 24 should be pursued. Although enhanced crossings are proposed in the CDOT Highway 24 Access Plan, the functionality of these crossings should be closely monitored during the construction design phase. Enhanced crossings will also have the beneficial effect of stitching the western neighborhoods with those to the east. The existing street system should be analyzed to see if some street segments can be converted to pedestrian and bike-only usage.

The community has voiced support for remotely parking automobiles to encourage greater pedestrian traffic and reduce traffic circulation in search of parking spaces. When visitors leave their cars at a remote location, they are more likely to spend longer periods of time in the town, which supports local businesses. This will also have the positive benefit of easing traffic in the downtown area, which in the summer months can become a problem.

However, vehicular traffic should not be marginalized, because for many people living outside the town, a car is the only practical means to get into town. Roadway improvements such as paving and facilitating traffic movements should be part of the capital improvement program. Unpaved roads should be considered for paving where traffic volumes warrant. Unpaved roads can be a source of nuisance dust and particulate matter that contributes to air pollution. Moreover, maintenance costs for frequent regrading may exceed the lifecycle cost of paving.

The CDOT access control plan should be put into place and closely monitored during the construction design phase. Convenient parking should be provided so that a quick stop at the store is still a possibility. A compromise should be crafted between providing for pedestrian safety through bump-outs and other pedestrian amenities, while also ensuring adequate parking. Where parking has been removed for pedestrian amenities, such as bump-outs, public information should clearly promote the value of these improvements.

The Central Colorado Regional Airport is an important asset for Buena Vista. While regular air service is a longer term goal, existing operations should be supported and opportunities for increased charter service explored to provide for more direct connections to larger airports.

Why Is Transportation Important?

Transportation networks form the framework on which the community is built. Local government should consider the type and quality of vehicular and pedestrian access in determining appropriate land uses. New development should be located where access is appropriate and convenient. Providing street and sidewalk systems where businesses have continuity from one to another increases the synergy of a business district. Alternate transportation facilities for bicycles and transit vehicles, as well as handicapped access, is becoming increasingly important in successful business districts. Transportation is no longer simply about cars and trucks, and the Complete Streets program emphasizes all forms of transportation and movement.



What Type of Transportation Improvements Are Needed?

The creation of more bike lanes and more continuous sidewalks were identified in citizen surveys as the most important transportation infrastructure to be provided. Building on efforts pursued by Chaffee County, existing bike lane marking should be maintained and expanded. Alternatives that would provide additional bike lanes should be explored. Options range from protected bike lanes, shared bike/vehicular roadways, or pedestrian and bike only facilities. Bike lanes should be maintained year round so that these routes remain viable options to getting around throughout the year.



Safe crossings of Highway 24 should be provided. Improving existing signalized crossings should be considered, while bridges or under crossings are possibly longer term solutions that will provide greater safety, when funding becomes available. Crossings should be located in close proximity to schools or routes utilized to access schools. Certain corridors for continuous sidewalks should be prioritized for completion. Areas of the pedestrian system lacking in connectivity should be completed.

Providing for a transit center, located so that highway vehicular traffic can be intercepted, should be considered. While a transit center may be a longer term goal to achieve, it should be pedestrian and bike friendly and its location connected to the downtown amenities by a circulator bus or other means of public transit. The concept of a transit center may also be merged with the supported notion of providing remote parking.

Entrance monumentation should be provided in conjunction with improved wayfinding signage to direct visitors to remote parking, the business district, river access, and other amenities. Bike routes should also be similarly marked to alert the visitors of their presence, and to ensure safe vehicle and bike interaction.

The railroad corridor downtown that bisects town can be an attractive and valuable asset if negotiations with the railroad can be pursued. The community voiced support for using this space for additional parking and possibly a pedestrian amenity that would provide a corridor between existing residential neighborhoods. This remains a general goal that should be explored as to feasibility and the fiscal impact carefully considered.

Addressing Potential Issues

There were relatively few issues raised with respect to the road system, and the need for additional roads and pavement. Most of the issues raised focused on bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the need to improve safety and connectivity with respect to these facilities. Parking facilities were also discussed frequently, particularly with respect to providing convenient parking to East Main Street. In this context, the streetscape improvements on East Main Street got mixed reviews because they had displaced some number of parking spaces. However, these improvements are important for the downtown and their value should be promoted and enhanced by additional amenities. On the other hand, more formal replacement parking should be provided near to East Main, with the railroad land as a significant possible location. While there was generally mild support for public transit improvements, this area should continue to be investigated, as a segment of the population ages and to provide alternatives for remote parking.

Goals, Policies, and Action Items

Goal 1: New and existing development will closely consider accessibility, parking, and alternative transportation.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will continue to develop a program to address street design and appearance in addition to existing streetscape improvements by working with and supporting the efforts of the Beautification Committee.

Action Items:

- Provide development standards on crosswalk design, wayfinding signage, lighting, and landscaping to improve safety and the streetscape aesthetic.
- Provide public information on the value of curb extensions (often called bump-outs) and other streetscape amenities that may reduce parking, and enhance these amenities with additional landscaping and outdoor commercial activity.



- **Policy:** Areas with sprawling commercial land, and land along Highway 24 should be re-developed over time into compact areas so that the businesses may be more easily accessed by pedestrians.

Action Items:

- Higher density development will only be located where existing or planned road facilities are appropriately built and designed to serve it.
- New streets will be designed with equal consideration for the integration with the existing network, connectivity to amenities, visual character, and safety.
- Future development will be required to pay its fair share of the cost of streets improvements made necessary by each development through a professionally-calculated impact fee system.

- **Policy:** Develop fiscal mechanisms to fairly allocate the cost of street improvements so that only the capacity-related improvement costs accrued by each future development will be required as mitigation from that development.

Action Item:

- Subdivision standards in the Land Use Code rewrite should be updated to require all future development to address connectivity to a sidewalk or trail system.

- **Policy:** Convenient parking should be maintained, particularly in proximity to commercial zones including East and West Main Street, and the library area.

Action Items:

- Provide adequate alternative parking for East Main Street, focusing on the development of the railroad land for this purpose.
- Parking should be provided and parking regulations enforced to facilitate public transit.
- Consider pursuing remote parking of automobiles and the creation of a transit center.

- **Policy:** Curb cuts should be minimized or combined wherever possible, and alleys used for access and parking wherever possible.

Action Items:

- Alley access should be improved and utilized wherever possible instead of curb cuts.
- Encourage side and rear parking in new residential development.

Goal 2: Buena Vista will emphasize and improve the community's gateways.

- **Policy:** Improvements to the Highway 24 intersection with Main Street should be pursued to include improved crossing facilities, signage, public art, and other means so that the intersection is beautified to encourage traffic to be drawn into the downtown commercial core.

Action Items:

- In conjunction with Beautification Committee efforts, pursue public art projects as a means of providing "brand identity" for the community.
- **Policy:** Entrance monumentation and wayfinding signage or monuments will be studied and erected along Highway 24.

Action Item:

- Host a design competition for designs for the entrance monumentation to encourage local artists and designers to submit ideas that speak of the uniqueness of the community.

Goal 3: Buena Vista will promote multi-modal transportation options.

- **Policy:** Funds for sidewalk expansion on existing streets and the creation of more continuous sidewalks will be allocated in the annual budget and transportation capital facilities plan.

Action Item:

- Study the creation of additional routes, such as a trail along Cottonwood Creek, and the conversion of existing streets to encourage multi-modal transportation.
- **Policy:** Buena Vista will consider using special assessments to improve or develop pedestrian sidewalks and amenities, such as bike racks, in priority areas.

Action Items:

- Support existing initiatives, such as bike lane striping.
- Maintain bike lanes year round.
- Publicize the popularity of biking in the community and provide educational opportunities aimed at creating safe biking practices, including safe interaction with motor vehicles.



Goal 4: Buena Vista will strive to improve Highway 24 as a transportation asset.

- **Policy:** The CDOT Access Control Plan should be implemented.

Action Item:

- The functionality of the improvements constructed in connection with the CDOT Access

Control Plan will be monitored during and after construction.

- **Policy:** Highway 24 is a central spine in Buena Vista's traffic system and the Town should strive to capitalize on the positive aspects and mitigate negative consequences.

Action Items:

- Improvements to sidewalks, crosswalks, and formalizing existing bike lanes should be pursued along the Highway 24 corridor.
- Formalization of setback requirements, architectural guidelines, and signage should also be completed.

Goal 5: Safe routes to school will be provided to allow school children to safely walk or bike to school on their own.

- **Policy:** Improved methods of crossing Highway 24 will be explored with a focus of locating crossings near schools.

Action Items:

- Study existing routes to school and document missing segments or dangerous conditions.
- Existing signalized crossings should be improved to ensure safe and comfortable use.
- Coordinate with parent groups and the schools to identify concerns and opportunities.

Goal 6: Continue to support the Central Colorado Regional Airport.

- **Policy:** Support the findings of the 2016 Airport Master Plan.

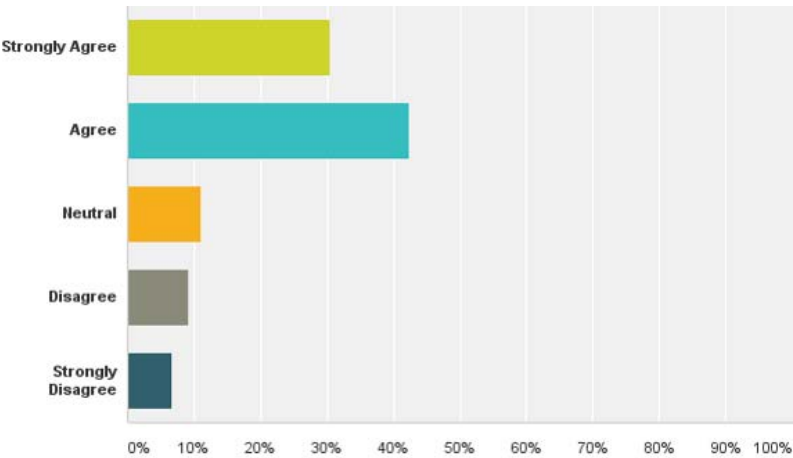
Action Item:

- Consider opportunities to attract more charter service and/or possible commercial service.

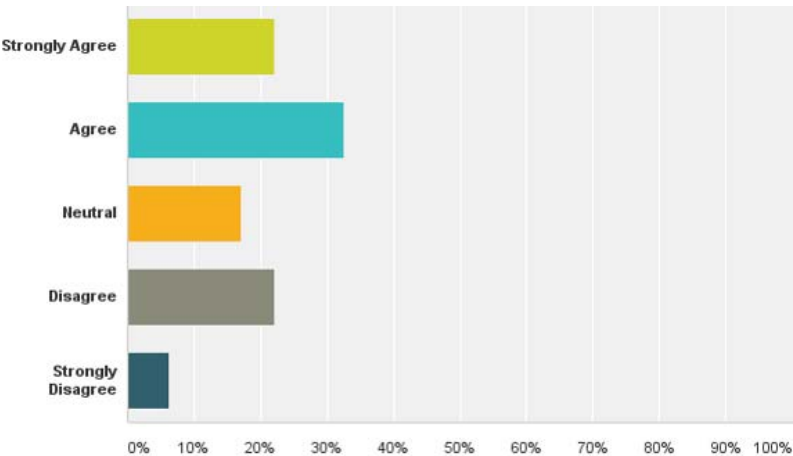


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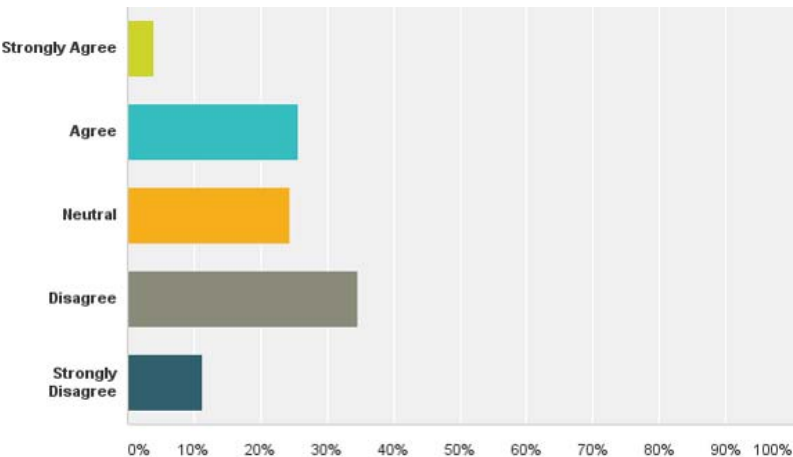
Question 82: Roads should be constructed to accommodate bike lanes.

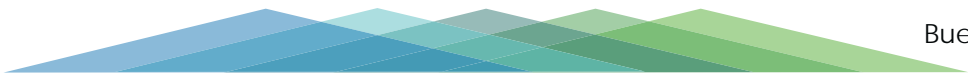


Question 87: We should attempt to be a community that is less dependent on cars.



Question 88: The trail system and connectivity is adequate around the Town of Buena Vista.







Chapter 6

PARKS, RECREATION, TRAILS & OPEN SPACES



Overview

Scenic views of the Collegiate Peaks, adjacency to the Arkansas River (including the newly designated national monument Brown's Canyon), easy access to public lands, and a range of recreational opportunities are among Buena Vista's greatest assets and the reason many people choose to visit or make the Buena Vista their home.

The future development of Buena Vista's recreation system should focus on the protection of habitat and scenic resources, recreational uses, trail connectivity, and accessibility. Future trail expansion should connect existing trails to improve and maintain easy access to public lands.

The Town's extensive recreation programs and facilities have become a valuable community asset, and an integral part of residents' quality of life. These programs and facilities must be continually reassessed and revitalized to meet changing demographic needs and community desires.

Vision

The residents of Buena Vista believe in preserving and enhancing their enjoyment of, and access to parks, recreational opportunities, open space, and trails.

Why Are They Important?

Parks and trails are an important community asset for the Town of Buena Vista for numerous reasons, more than can be articulated in this document. Parks provide opportunities for community gatherings and events, improve the economy by enhancing the already thriving tourism industry, preserve and protect open space, and provide opportunities for physical activity to improve fitness and mental health.

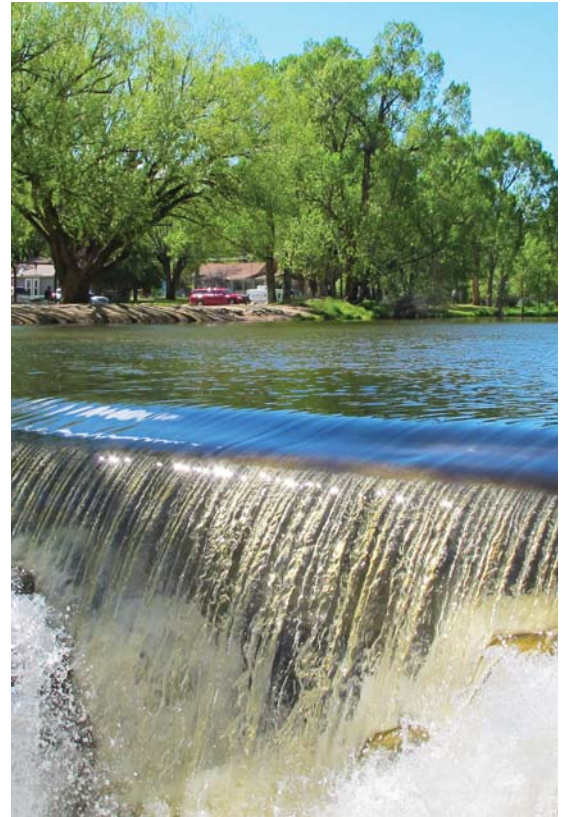
The trail system provides residents and visitors alternatives for travel between home, workplace, school, businesses, parks, and public lands. Trails also boost shoulder season visitation, enhancing Buena Vista's year round economy. A strong parks, trails, and recreation system fosters a family oriented community, which is a cornerstone of the Town of Buena Vista's Vision Statement.

What Is Needed?

Connectivity should be the central focus of trail planning in Buena Vista, both in town and with broader connections between BLM, County, and Town parks, trails, and recreation systems. There are opportunities to improve existing linkages that are faced with challenges such as overuse, user conflicts, or inadequate infrastructure. An example of overuse and user conflict is the access to Whipple Trail System and Midland Bike Trail to the East of Buena Vista on BLM land. The high traffic to these popular trail systems causes pedestrian and bike conflicts at the bridge and improvement and/or a secondary access should be a priority in future trail planning efforts.

Developing new connections to regional trails, such as the Colorado Trail to the West of Buena Vista, is a priority. The proposed Stage and Rail Trail is an exciting opportunity for Buena Vista to collaborate with neighboring towns and other like-minded organizations. The planning for this trail is ongoing, and will improve linkages throughout Chaffee and Lake County. The preferred alignment through Buena Vista will follow Arizona Street and pass through the center of town, or alternatively the trail will be routed along existing riverfront town trails bringing users near South Main development and through the Buena Vista River Park. Development of new trails should be thought of in conjunction with this long range trail planning effort.

The Town has a strong desire for a new recreation and event facility. The existing Community Center is an important facility, but not adequate to serve all the needs of Buena Vista. The Town is currently working with a consulting firm on a Recreation Event Center Feasibility & Architectural Study. While determining an appropriate location and program for the facility will be developed through a much more focused public outreach/planning process, preliminary desires found throughout the master plan public outreach process included a community gym, recreational swimming pool, and sledding hill. The facility may also include a multipurpose space that could be utilized as a performing arts venue, a senior center, and/or a conference center. Potential locations will be explored in the feasibility study, and should include sites throughout the River Park as well as the Rodeo grounds. Opportunities to fund recreational development through donations and selling naming rights should be explored by the local government.



Overall, residents feel the existing community park system is adequate and there is not a strong desire for new large community parks. The existing river access, white water features, play fields, and other land intensive and larger scale amenities appear to meet the needs of the community. However, there are connections that need to be completed to existing trails within River Park, and improved connectivity between the community parks is required. As trail connectivity is developed, pathways detached from the street rather than sidewalks should be explored where appropriate.

As opposed to the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, there is more interest to have neighborhood and pocket parks throughout Buena Vista rather than new large community parks. Opportunities to build parks on vacant lots in park-poor neighborhoods should be a priority in park planning, as well as improving access to existing parks. Neighborhoods West of Highway 24 are generally lacking in park facilities. The town has already set the stage for the development of more pocket parks through the construction of a splash park on East Main Street.



In general, residents of the Town of Buena Vista feel the existing open space is adequate and new open space does not need to be actively sought. However, if new open space is to be designated, the emphasis should be on designating land within the floodplain which provides great habitat and recreational value, while reducing floodplain development.

Cultural sites, such as the Rodeo Grounds and Turner Farm, are very important to the community. Residents have conflicting opinions when discussing development at the Rodeo grounds. Thoughtful consideration and consensus building will be crucial when determining whether to

improve and expand upon the recreational activities of the Rodeo Grounds, or to preserve the existing largely passive open space. At this time, the community appears to agree that the main emphasis should be on maintaining existing facilities.

Addressing Potential Issues

Providing quality maintenance to existing parks and trails can be challenging due to limited resources. The community places a high value on the maintenance of their existing facilities, and does not feel that the local government spends too much on recreation. There is an opportunity to increase the level of maintenance through both the labor of town employees, and expanding community volunteer days. The Town should continue to foster the already strong stewardship ethic possessed by many of the residents.

As future development occurs in Buena Vista, smaller neighborhood parks should be provided in proximity to new development and population centers. Requirements for acreage dedications and program requirements will be specified in the municipal Land Use Code. Fee-in-lieu payments may be appropriate for small projects, but in the case of major subdivisions, developers should be required to provide actual land and improvements for parks.

Goals, Policies, and Action Items

Goal 1: Buena Vista will proceed with the development of new trails and the expansion of the existing trail system.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will promote and support future and existing plans for a trail system that interconnects with regional and public land system trails.

Action Items:

- Improve access to BLM land East of Town. The high traffic to these popular trail systems results in pedestrian and bike conflicts at the bridge. Improvements and/or a secondary access should be a priority in future trail planning efforts.
- Improve access and wayfinding signage, like the signs shown to the right, for trails West of Town, such as the Colorado Trail, fourteeners trails, and alpine lake hikes.



- Continue to foster and enhance important partnerships with other jurisdictions and organizations including the Bureau of Land Management, Chaffee County, the Northern Chaffee County Connections (NC3), and the Greater Arkansas River Nature Association (GARNA).

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will prioritize linkages between existing and planned trails, with special emphasis on spanning existing gaps within the system.

Action Items:

- Develop priorities for implementation of the 2014 Trails Master Plan.
- Improve connectivity between existing parks, particularly between the four large community parks, Town, and the Rodeo Grounds.

- **Policy:** Trail easements meeting criteria in the 2010 Development Code and future Land Use Code rewrite will be required in all new subdivisions and annexation developments, where appropriate, prior to approval.

Action Item:

- Review trail easement criteria in the Land Use Code to ensure that new subdivisions provide adequate easements for trail facilities.

- **Policy:** All proposed new trails will be reviewed by the Buena Vista Trails Advisory Board.

Goal 2: Buena Vista will pursue a balanced parks and recreation system.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista's parks system should strive to contain the following elements and characteristics:

Community Park: Community parks are large parks meant to serve the entire community. These parks will not be less than 10 acres and have the full complement of utilities available on site (water, electricity, etc.). They will contain major, permanent recreation facilities such as ball fields, skate parks, public events venues, and other land-intensive usages as well as park benches, picnic pavilions and play sets. These parks will have automatic irrigation on-site, adequate parking and full connectivity to the trail system. Due to likely intensive use of these facilities the location, access and buffering from surrounding neighborhood uses will be required.



Neighborhood Parks: Neighborhood parks are much smaller than community parks and are smaller than nine acres. Typically they are between one quarter acre and three acres, and are meant to serve those residents who live within walking distance, approximately one-half mile. These parks will not typically be served by any utilities other than electricity for limited night lighting and irrigation to maintain landscaping. Neighborhood parks will be fully landscaped, provide some seating and picnic benches as well as a small playground. The biggest neighborhood parks may contain court facilities such as tennis or basketball.

Action Items:

- Continue to implement the 2010 Recreation Facilities Master Plan. The Town has already completed many of the short range proposed improvements and is in the process of working towards the long range improvements through planning efforts such as Recreation Event Center Feasibility & Architectural Study.

- The town should look for opportunities to create parks in existing neighborhoods that lack park space within walking distance of the general population. These efforts should focus on utilizing centrally located vacant lots within the neighborhood.

□ **Policy:** Buena Vista should embrace the development of pocket parks where appropriate.

Action Items:

- Support the Beautification Committee's plans to beautify and revitalize the Town through thoughtful and manageable projects such as a xeriscape demonstration garden. These projects can be realized through volunteer support and are a great opportunity to strengthen and educate the community and enhance the environment.
- Look for opportunities along Highway 24 and East Main Street to install small gardens, planters, and shade trees to improve aesthetic quality and enhance the pedestrian experience.

□ **Policy:** Parks should only be built on suitable lands that are accessible and usable by the general public, bordered by public streets, and/or accessible from adjacent parks, trails, or bikeways.

□ **Policy:** Park land dedication, or cash-in-lieu of land dedication, will be required in all new subdivisions and annexation developments prior to approval as specified in the 2010 Development Code and future Land Use Code rewrite. Large developments in particular should be required to include neighborhood parks in order to preserve open space and provide recreational facilities in proximity to the population.

Action Item:

- Define a threshold in the Land Use Code rewrite for the size of new development that will require actual land dedication rather than cash-in-lieu.

Goal 3: Buena Vista will identify and conserve priority open space lands in and around the Town.

□ **Policy:** All open spaces should provide some recreational, wildlife or scenic value. That is, small parcels that are left over after the site design and development and storm drainage catchment areas should not be accepted as open space or be maintained by the Town unless they are expressly determined to have preservation values.

□ **Policy:** Open space land dedication, or cash-in-lieu of land dedication, will be required in all new subdivisions and annexation developments prior to approval, as specified in the 2010 Development Code and the future Land Use Code rewrite.

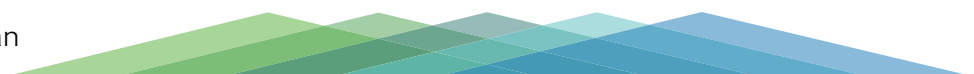
Action Items:

- Explore and identify priorities for the acquisition of open space that will provide for trail development and continuity.
- Explore the acquisition of open space parcels along Cottonwood Creek and other key areas of recreational value and environmental sensitivity.

Goal 4: Buena Vista will operate, maintain, and develop its parks, open space, and recreations system in such a manner as to minimize adverse local and regional environmental impacts.

Action Items:

- Update the 2002 Town of Buena Vista Planting Guide and reference it in the Land Use Code rewrite. This document will cultivate a naturalized, low-water use, and low-maintenance landscape throughout town.



- Buena Vista should use green building materials, renewable energy sources, native plant species, and energy efficient operations whenever feasible with park and trail development.
- The park, recreation, trails and open space programs will incorporate educational features and volunteer participation into all aspects of the system so as to further engage and inform the community and visitors of the extent and purpose of the programs.

Goal 5: Emphasize bicycling and walking within the Buena Vista 3 mile planning area.

- **Policy:** Integration of off-street and on-street networks to create, safe comfortable corridors for non-motorized travel.

Action Items:

- Develop pathways detached from the street instead of sidewalks, when appropriate.
- Expand on the existing network of bike lanes throughout Town.
- Improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians crossing and traveling on Highway 24.

Goal 6: Focus future expansion of open space, parks, and trails within the floodplain.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista has ample land within the floodplain that should be studied for conservation and recreational value. This will also deter building in the floodplain and address environmental and safety concerns.

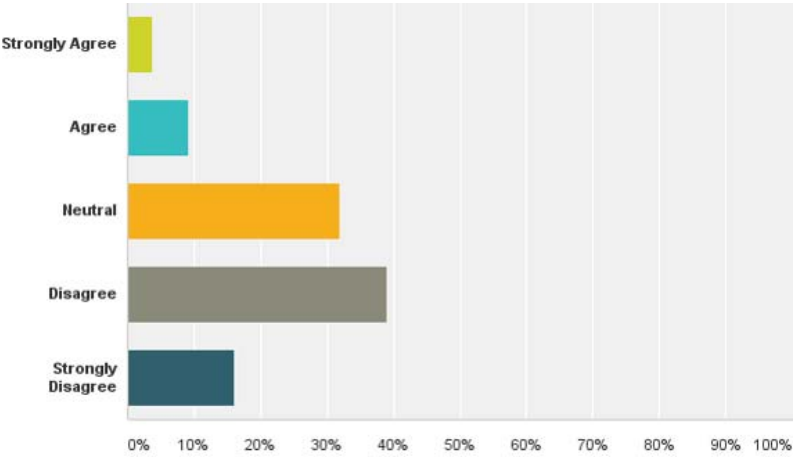
Action Item:

- Pursue opportunities to create a connected trail along Cottonwood Creek through town that would provide great recreational value as well as deter building in the floodplain.

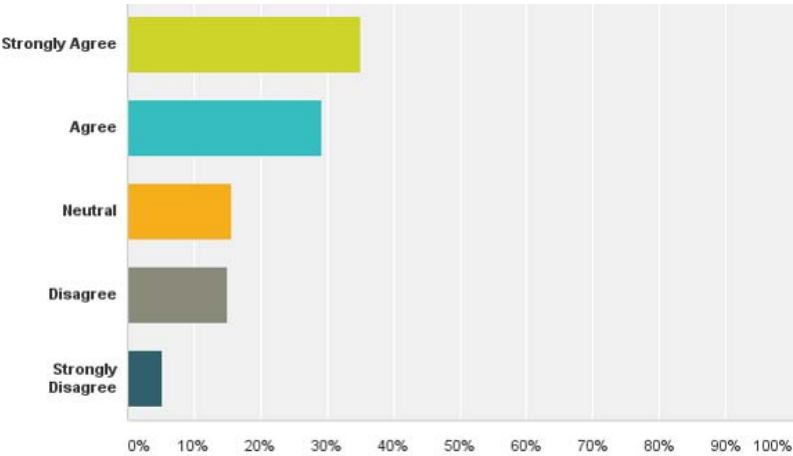


The graphs below reflect community voting on key issues during the Comprehensive Plan public participation process:

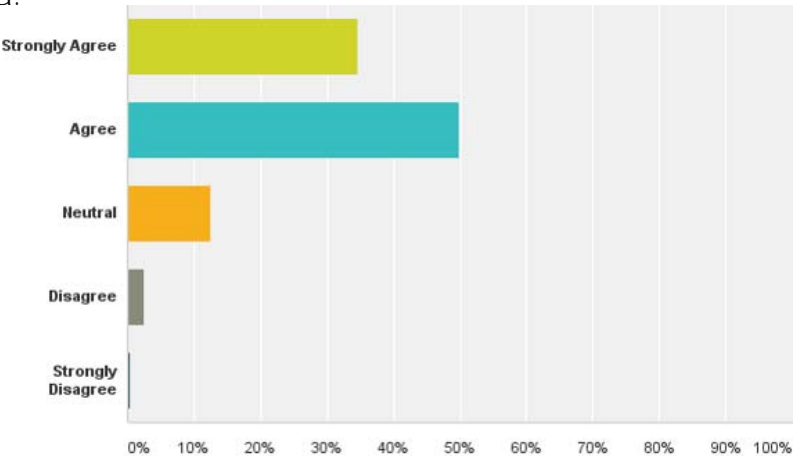
Question 59: Local government spends too much on recreation.



Question 61: Buena Vista needs a recreation and event center with a community gym.



Question 70: Cultural sites, such as the Rodeo Grounds and Turner Farm, are important to Buena Vista.







Chapter 7

RESPECTING THE ENVIRONMENT



Overview

Wide-ranging environmental stewardship that addresses local and regional concerns is integral to the long-term public health, safety, and economic success of the Town of Buena Vista. Being a community that promotes environmental stewardship will require the community to consider and protect air and water quality, ensure that urban, rural, and agricultural land uses coexist in a well-planned pattern, reduce the potential impacts of natural hazards, and maintain the natural features that make Buena Vista an attractive community. Central to these efforts will be the creation of an Environmental Action Plan.

Vision

Environmental stewardship is not the purview of any one group or segment of the Buena Vista community. The community must collectively commit to ensure that past environmental efforts are continued, while looking to develop new initiatives to meet community goals for a healthy environment.

The community has voiced their desire for the local government to be a partner in pursuing environmental stewardship. By forging a partnership, the community will ensure that acting in an environmentally conscious way will become a widely accepted and practiced approach applied to how we live, work, and play.

By proactively integrating concepts such as increased density, environmentally sensitive design, and historic preservation in the Land Use Code, the local government and the public will automatically consider the environmental consequences of various development proposals and infrastructure upgrades. Moreover, the integration of environmental stewardship in the Land Use Code will imbue a certain level of predictability in the land use process. This will ensure that proposers of new development will know what to expect and development will generally be accepted by the public, confident that



it reflects responsible design. In this way, divisive conflicts over appropriate environmental controls may be avoided.

To be a successful environmental steward, the Buena Vista community needs to look beyond what can be accomplished inside the Town limits. Local government should work with other communities and Chaffee County to plan for the protection of watersheds, forest health, and wildlife habitats and migration routes. These larger scale considerations will require integrating transportation planning, infrastructure improvements, waste management, and resource conservation into the planning process.



Why Is Environmental Stewardship Important?

The strong support of environmental issues voiced by the community indicates that many in the community already understand the three Laws of Ecology explored in Barry Commoner's book *The Closing Circle* (1971). The three laws explored in this bestselling book consist of the following:

1. **There isn't any such thing as a free lunch.** When certain choices are made, such as to approve development on particular parcel, these choices involve costs that may have a negative impact on the environment. The community should remember to tread carefully and proceed only when impacts are fully understood.
2. **Everything is connected to everything else.** Similar to Commoner's First Law of Ecology above, if concepts like storm water treatment are required when a new parking lot is created, the runoff from the parking lot will be cleaner running into the river, thereby improving the health of the riparian environment. Two things, a parking lot and the river, which at first appear to be unrelated, are actually critically connected.
3. **You can't fool Mother Nature.** While we may take great care in studying the environment and understanding how our actions impact the environment, we can never know everything, and we must be attentive in continuing to understand the environment and the impacts our decisions are having. If we seek to increase our knowledge of what can and cannot be pursued, a healthier environment will result.

What needs to be considered?

Water – Buena Vista is a community that lives and succeeds due in large part to the water that runs through its rivers and streams. We drink this water, we play in this water, and we use this water to sustain our agricultural and ranching heritage.

Ensuring the sources for drinking water--the Infiltration Gallery, the groundwater well, and Cottonwood Creek--are protected and managed appropriately to ensure a safe and consistent water supply will have an immediate impact on the health of our community. Additionally, water conservation measures and Land Use Code provisions that encourage responsible water usage will ensure that Buena Vista will continue to have adequate water in the future. Buena Vista must ensure that maintenance and periodic replacement of the existing distribution system is



considered. Finally, requiring new development to pay for expansion of the system should be codified.

Maintaining and strengthening the Watershed Protection District (WSPD) is key to watershed protection. The recommendations made in the Water Resource Master Plan completed by RG and Associates, LLC in August 2014 are an appropriate starting point in strengthening the WSPD. These steps include:

- Modify the boundary of the WSPD when supply points are added or changed;
- Increase public awareness of the WSPD so that the purpose of the WSPD and review requirements are widely understood and accepted;
- Maintain regular inspections of Individual Sewage Disposal Systems (ISDS) and keep records of inspections, which is a County function;
- Revise WSPD code language to enhance clarity and understanding;
- Establish clear requirements for applying for a permit within the WSPD for development that may impact water sources.

Broadening the community's environmental stewardship to a more regional scale by engaging in discussions to protect the Cottonwood Creek watershed should be pursued. Again, following the recommendations listed in the Water Resource Master Plan, engagement with upstream property owners and users, Chaffee County, San Isabel National Forest, recreational and environmental groups, and other interested parties will ensure that the goals of watershed protection are met. Finally, the long-term goals for water as contained in the Town of Buena Vista 2016 Strategic Plan should be reviewed and policies put in place to ensure these goals are addressed. These are:

- Dedicate EQR for urban
- Operating agreement with Upper Ark
- Moltz reservoir connection with Trout Creek
- ACA gravel pit storage
- Run accounting for remaining SFE
- Make water plant operational



Built Environment - Attention must be paid to our built environment. Cleaning up brownfield parcels and reusing them in an appropriate manner will help maintain density and improve the visual qualities of the community. Enforcing development and landscape standards should be consistently applied. Immediate action can be taken by supporting beautification projects within Town, as these are tangible and accessible initiatives that can energize the community towards environmental stewardship.

Codified elements of environmental stewardship – Unless planning is approached with an environmental emphasis, important actions can be overlooked or ignored. Environmentally sensitive development should be required by enacting code requirements that mandate storm water management, environmentally sensitive building practices and materials, and greater density, among other environmental goals to be determined by the community.

Providing for Alternatives - Enhancements to trails and pedestrian routes will encourage alternative transportation and free residents to leave their car for longer distance trips. Flexibility in the Land Use Code for emerging concepts in construction and land use will help ensure that the community can get away from the “old way of doing things.”

Consider appropriate growth levels - Desired future growth rates should be considered and linked to policies for growth control. Finally, master planning efforts to answer specific goals should be pursued, such as the best use of the Rodeo Grounds.

Addressing Potential Issues

The Environmental Planning Handbook for Sustainable Communities and Regions by Tom Daniels and Katherine Daniels (American Planning Association Planners Press, 2003) contains recommendations for developing sustainable communities. The authors advocate taking stock of the local environment and creating an Environmental Action Plan. This process starts with the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Code updates, where zoning, subdivision and land development regulations, and Capital Improvements are considered through an environmental lens. In conjunction with considering these topics, an Environmental Action Plan should be adopted to influence the goals and objectives discussed in the Comprehensive Plan. The Environmental Action Plan should contain the following eight steps:

1. The public and Board of Trustees recognize the need for environmental planning;
2. Officials then commit people and funding to the environmental planning effort, and appoint an Environmental Advisory Committee to assist the Planning & Zoning Commission;
3. The Planning & Zoning Commission, staff, and the Environmental Advisory Committee conduct an Environmental Needs Assessment Survey and solicit public input;
4. The Planning & Zoning Commission, staff, and the Environmental Advisory Committee develop a factual base of environmental conditions and analyze the information;
5. The Planning & Zoning Commission, staff, and the Environmental Advisory Committee draft a vision statement, broad goals, and specific objectives for the Environmental Action Plan;
6. The Planning & Zoning Commission, staff, and the Environmental Advisory Committee draft an Action Strategy to articulate a set of land use controls, infrastructure spending, tax programs, and other regulations that will put the Environmental Action Plan into practice;
7. Elected officials solicit public input and adopt the Environmental Action Plan; and
8. The Planning & Zoning Commission and Board of Trustees implement, monitor, and evaluate the performance of the Environmental Action Plan through an annual review, and make revisions and updates as needed.

The creation of an Environmental Action Plan will ensure that planning decisions are made in an environmental responsible manner, and help ensure that the community continues to grow in their environmental stewardship.

Goals, Policies, and Action Items

Goal 1: Buena Vista will promote and pursue sustainable development standards in new and redevelopment projects.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will promote development that incorporates principles of sustainable design in new construction to reduce both energy and resource consumption.

Action Items:

- Establish land use and building code requirements that minimize energy and water use.
 - Utilize sustainable design standards such as the U.S. Department of Energy's "Building American" program.
 - Pursue sustainable development standards that simultaneously consider the financial, environmental, and social impacts of decisions prior to implementation.
- **Policy:** Buena Vista should use green building materials, renewable energy sources, native plant species, and energy efficient operations whenever feasible with park and trail development.

Action Items:

- Determine the extent of use of pesticides, herbicides, and other toxic chemicals, and minimize their use wherever possible.
- Use renewable energy sources and locally-produced materials for new recreational developments.

Goal 2: Create an Environmental Action Plan to focus policy efforts and create community understanding and buy-in for environmental stewardship.

- **Policy:** Building upon the updated Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code updates, the Environmental Action Plan will inform and influence the goals and objectives discussed in the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Policy:** The community will consider air and water quality, manage land uses, seek to reduce the impacts of natural hazards, and preserve natural features of the community.

Action Items:

- Appoint Environmental Advisory Committee to work with Planning & Zoning Commission.
- Prepare an Environmental Needs Assessment Survey to obtain public input.
- Based on Needs Assessment findings, draft a vision statement with broad goals and specific objectives.
- Draft an Action Strategy to put Environmental Action Plan into practice.
- Adopt the Environmental Action Plan. Implement, monitor, and evaluate the plan on an annual basis and make revisions as necessary.

Goal 3: The community will collectively commit to supporting and promoting environmental stewardship.

- **Policy:** The local government will partner with community groups in pursuing and supporting environmental stewardship.

Action Items:

- Provide education opportunities and sponsor forums to encourage the community to interact with other members of the community and local government to discuss environmental issues.
- **Policy:** Concepts such as increased density, environmentally sensitive design, and historic preservation are integral to the character of the community.

Action Items:

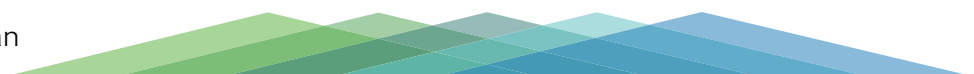
- Support local initiatives and neighborhood level activities aimed at addressing some area of environmental concern.
- Integrate increased density, environmentally sensitive design, and historic preservation concepts into the Land Use Code.

Goal 4: The community's involvement with environmental stewardship must extend beyond the Town limits to work with other communities, the County, and volunteer groups active in the region.

- **Policy:** The community will support opportunities to protect watersheds, forest health, and wildlife habitats and migration routes.

Action Items:

- In connection with regional planning activities, the Town of Buena Vista will promote topics such as transportation planning, infrastructure improvements, waste management, and



resource conservation to be considered and incorporated in regional planning activities.

- Develop strategies to protect the Town's watersheds as part of the Water Resource Master Plan.

Goal 5: The sources of the community's drinking water will be protected and managed appropriately.

- **Policy:** Protection of the Infiltration Gallery, the groundwater well, and Cottonwood Creek must be of primary importance to the community.
- **Policy:** The Land Use Code will require and prescribe water conservation measures and landscape standards that promote water conservation.
- **Policy:** New or alternative means of providing drinking water for the community should be periodically studied to ensure that demand does not outstrip supply.

Action Items:

- Maintain and strengthen the Watershed Protection District.
- Ensure the recommendations made in the 2014 Water Resource Master Plan are followed and implemented, when appropriate and possible.

Goal 6: The Town will consider new and existing development for its environmental impacts and seek to minimize the environmental footprint of development to the greatest extent possible.

- **Policy:** Development and landscaping standards will be codified and enforced universally.
- **Policy:** Existing efforts by the Beautification Committee and other community groups to minimize environmental impacts will be supported and encouraged.
- **Policy:** The potential for future growth will be carefully considered and policies created to manage new growth in the community with the goal of maintaining Buena Vista's small town identity.

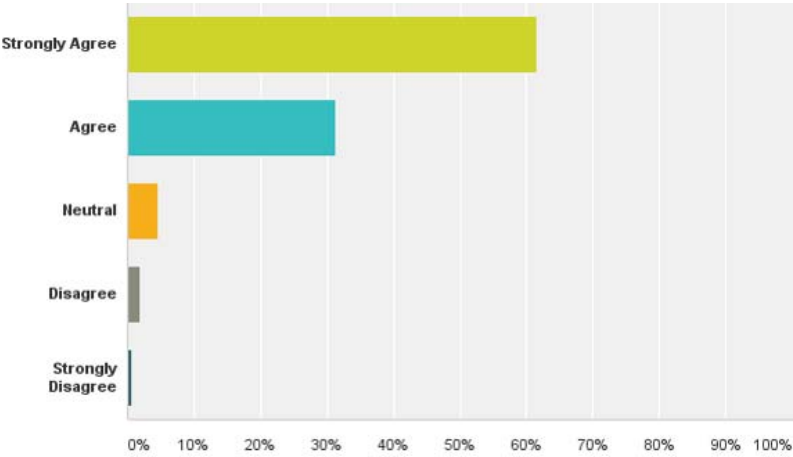
Action Items:

- Develop storm water management requirements.
- Outline accepted environmentally sensitive building practices and materials.
- Encourage density, infill, and adaptive reuse of structures.
- Encourage historic preservation efforts.
- Include provisions in the Land Use Code that require sustainable development practices.
- Encourage flexibility in the Land Use Code to provide for emerging concepts in construction techniques and land use that can demonstrate an ability to minimize environmental impacts.

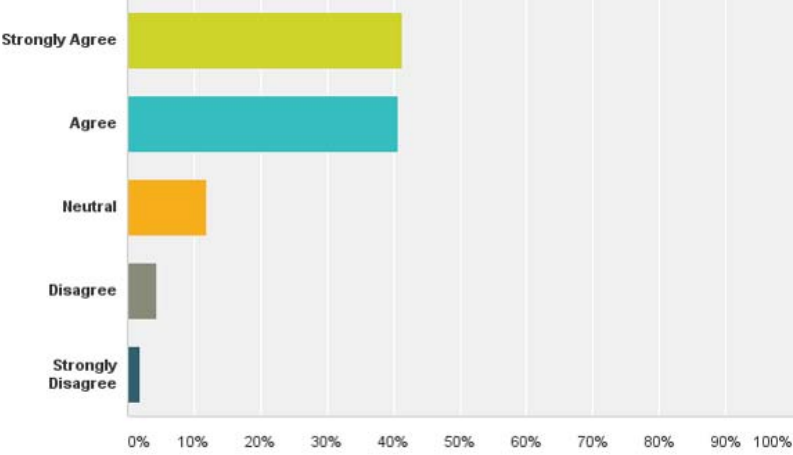


The graphs below reflect community voting on key issues during the Comprehensive Plan public participation process:

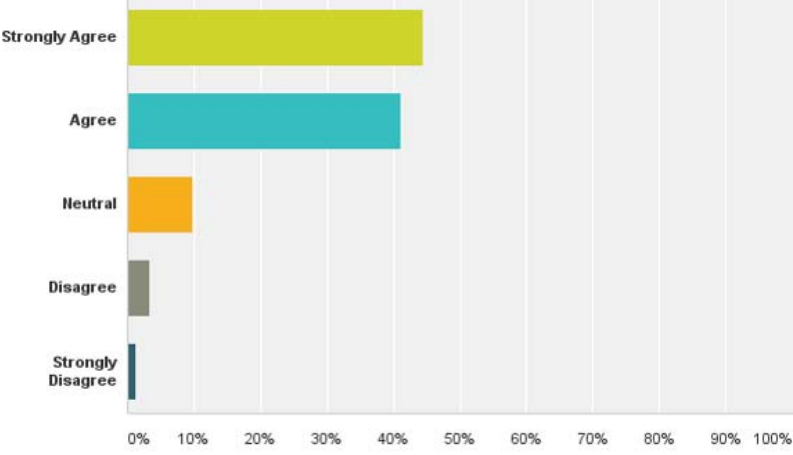
Question 48: Air and water quality issues are important to Buena Vista.

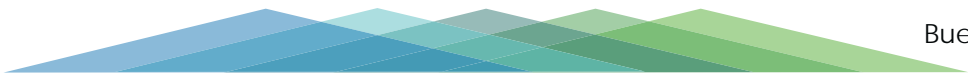


Question 49: Development should minimize environmental impacts, for example, with better storm water management, using environmentally-friendly materials, encouraging renewable energy.



Question 50: We need to be concerned about energy and natural resource protection and sustainability.







Chapter 8

HISTORY AND HERITAGE



Overview

Preserving Buena Vista's history connects the community to its culture and creates a sense of place for the Town. The community's notable buildings and places which have contributed to the cultural, artistic, social, economic, political, and architectural character of Town provide a tangible history lesson, creating a framework for new development and offering a touchstone for design. The community should build on the important work completed by the Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board, which helped Buena Vista designate local buildings on the National Historic Register, as well as get grants for historic preservation. The work of the local Buena Vista Heritage group should be utilized as a spring board for future historic preservation efforts.

Currently listed buildings include:

- Behrman Ranch
- J.M. Bonney House
- Buena Vista Depot
- Chaffee County Courthouse & Jail
(Buena Vista Heritage Museum)
- Comanche Drive-In
- Fay House
- First National Bank of Buena Vista Building
- Grace Episcopal Church
- Jacobs Building
- Kelley-McDonald House
- Orpheum Theater
- Rock Ledge/Franzel Ranch
- St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church
- Turner Place
- Vicksburg Mining Camp
- Winfield Mining Camp
- Wright-Sindlinger House

Vision

Historic districts and individual historic landmarks should be defined based on a common historical or architectural thread that binds the community or district together. The historic downtown has been identified as a prime candidate to be the first designated historic district. As historic districts are designated, guidelines for development should be created so that new development occurs in a manner where historic resources are respected and not overshadowed by the new construction.

The criteria to be eligible for historic preservation must be sufficiently broad so that all elements of Buena Vista's



colorful character can be appreciated. As the criteria for historic preservation are broad, so too should be the historic eras that are considered important to preserve. Buildings and places that are relatively young can also hold importance to the community and should be considered eligible for preservation.

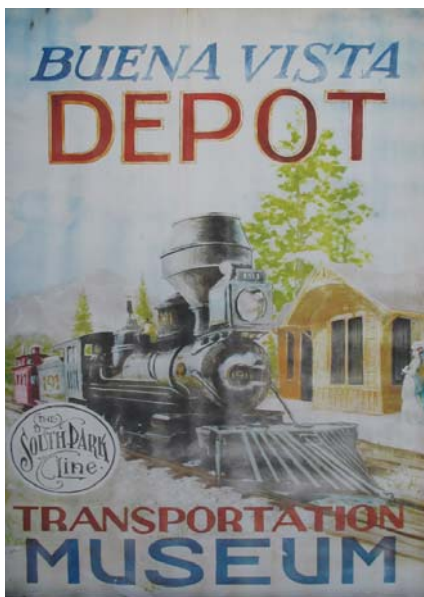
The community has voiced their desire for a careful process of assessing the historic importance of structures and places contemplated for preservation. The creation of an official list of historic and potentially historic buildings and sites is important so that some level of certainty exists for property owners and potential purchasers.



Why is Historic Preservation Important?

Historic preservation brings the community together by identifying the type of story we want to tell and determining the type of community we want to be. Most importantly, historic preservation lends authenticity to the Town of Buena Vista by preserving what is unique and special about the town, and by making it an attractive place to visit, live, and do business.

How Should Historic Preservation Be Pursued?



While the community has expressed strong support for historic preservation, a process should be developed that outlines specific goals and approaches for historic preservation for the Town. To develop this outline, a Historic Preservation Commission should be created which is made up of citizens who have unique knowledge and experience that will inform and direct the preservation activities. Architects, landscape architects, historians, developers, active members of the community, and those with a long history of the community should be primarily considered to sit on the Historic Commission.

The Commission should act as a liaison between the community and the Board of Trustees advocating for historic preservation, nominating and vetting sites and structures eligible for historic preservation, and providing recommendations on regulations. The Historic Preservation Commission can also serve as a review body for any development located in a designated historic district. A member of the Town staff should work closely with the Historic Preservation Commission to assist in enforcement and monitoring of preservation.

Addressing Potential Issues

Incentives for preservation and restoration of historic structures need to be created so that property owners who voluntarily designate their properties are able to offset potentially costly repairs and rehabilitation of historic structures. Additionally, these incentives will provide economic support avoiding potentially more lucrative development that would cause the historic resource to be demolished. Private property rights are important and should be respected, with a balance struck between historic preservation and freedom to use property as desired.

However, the Town should not be seen as a museum that is not allowed to change. Revitalization and reuse of historic structures provides unique spaces for contemporary activities. This type of

adaptive reuse is very strongly supported by the community. Specifically, the community supports the historic downtown area as the most preferred location for more development and growth.

New construction should not be a replication of historic structures but rather offer a design of our own time that complements adjacent structures and the history of the Town.

A historic preservation ordinance should be prepared and adopted, which will provide the basis of historic preservation in Buena Vista.

Goals, Policies, and Action Items

Goal 1: Buena Vista will highlight and enhance the public's understanding of the community's heritage.



- **Policy:** Buena Vista will continue to support and assist the Heritage Museum's walking tour and other public and visitor outreach activities.

Action Items:

- Interpretive signage regarding historic buildings and areas will be installed in an effort to educate the public and visitors of the history of Buena Vista.
- **Policy:** Buena Vista will continue to support and assist in the maintenance and promotion of the Buena Vista Heritage Museum.

Action Items:

- Explore mechanisms to pay for improvements to the Heritage Museum that will support year round use of the facility.
- Review the history of Buena Vista, identify important eras, events, and figures that will be a resource for the community and the local government in connection with historic preservation.

Goal 2: A Historic Preservation Commission will be created to administer a historic preservation program to ensure the preservation of the cultural, artistic, social, economic, political, and architectural character of Buena Vista as well as review new development within historic districts.

- **Policy:** New development and infill in proximity to historic districts or buildings should be similar in scale, massing and architectural character of the district or other important properties.
- **Policy:** Buena Vista will create an economic incentive program to promote historic preservation including the leveraging of state heritage funds and other programs to preserve historic structures.

Action Items:

- Designate a key staff person to provide information on the range of economic incentives available to historically designated properties.
- **Policy:** Demolition or remodeling of identified resources will require review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Action Items:

- Buena Vista will create and codify regulations to govern a historic district or resources.
- Buena Vista will create an ordinance to review demolition or remodeling requests for

historic resources identified on the official list of historic or potentially historic buildings, places, or districts.

Goal 3: The Historic Preservation Commission will create an official list of historic or potentially historic buildings, places, or districts.

- **Policy:** Historic districts will be defined based on common historical or architectural elements.

Action Item:

- Identify specific districts based on shared historic preservation characteristics.

- **Policy:** Criteria for historic designation will not be overly prescriptive and criteria will be left to the discretion of the Historic Preservation Commission to determine what is eligible regardless of age.

Action Items:

- Undertake a historic resources survey to specifications adopted by History Colorado.
- Create criteria for historic designation of buildings, places, or districts.

Goal 4: New development and additions to historic resources will respect historic resources.

- **Policy:** New construction will not seek to replicate historic structures or forms, but rather should reflect current design approaches, so as to differentiate between old and new.

- **Policy:** Buena Vista will be considered a community that can accept new design approaches to its built environment.

- **Policy:** New uses and unique buildings will be welcome, as long as they are compatible with the dominant character of the community.

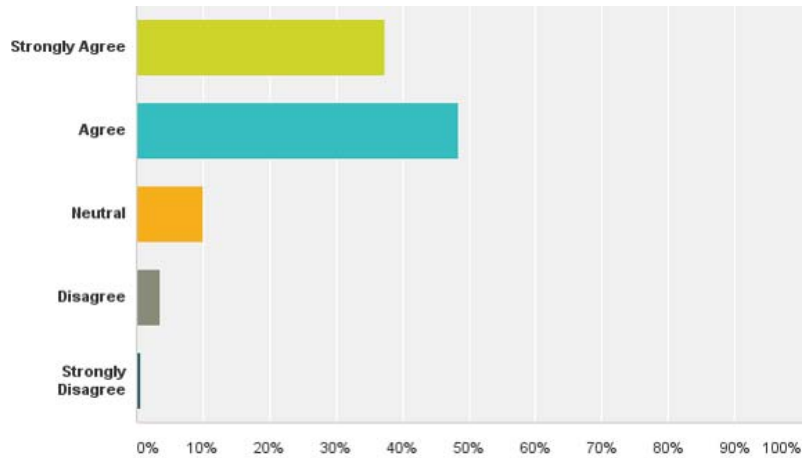
Action Item:

- Develop Land Use Code recommendations to provide for the compatibility of new structures in a historic context.

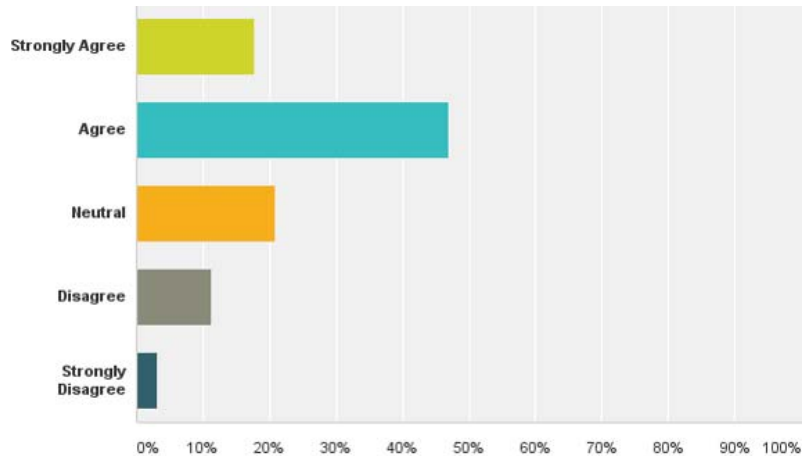


The graphs below reflect community voting on key issues during the Comprehensive Plan public participation process:

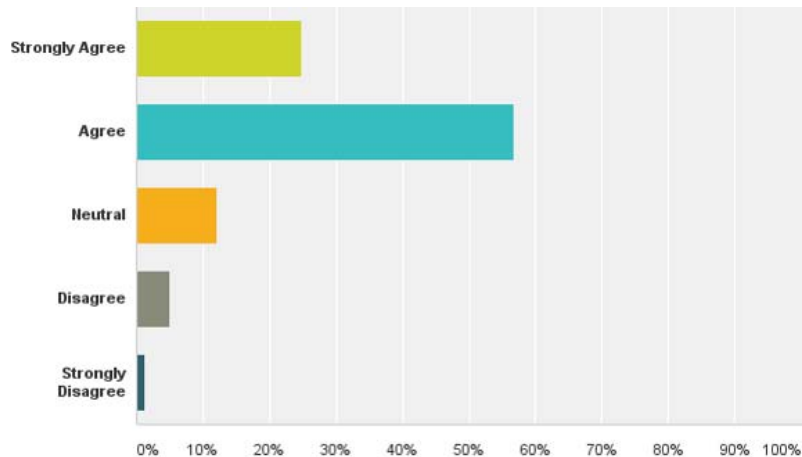
Question 31: The history of Buena Vista is important, so we should preserve, revitalize, and reuse historic buildings.



Question 93: Local government should develop design standards in historic areas of town that are compatible with existing historic buildings.



Question 94: Incentives to preserve and restore historic structures are important.

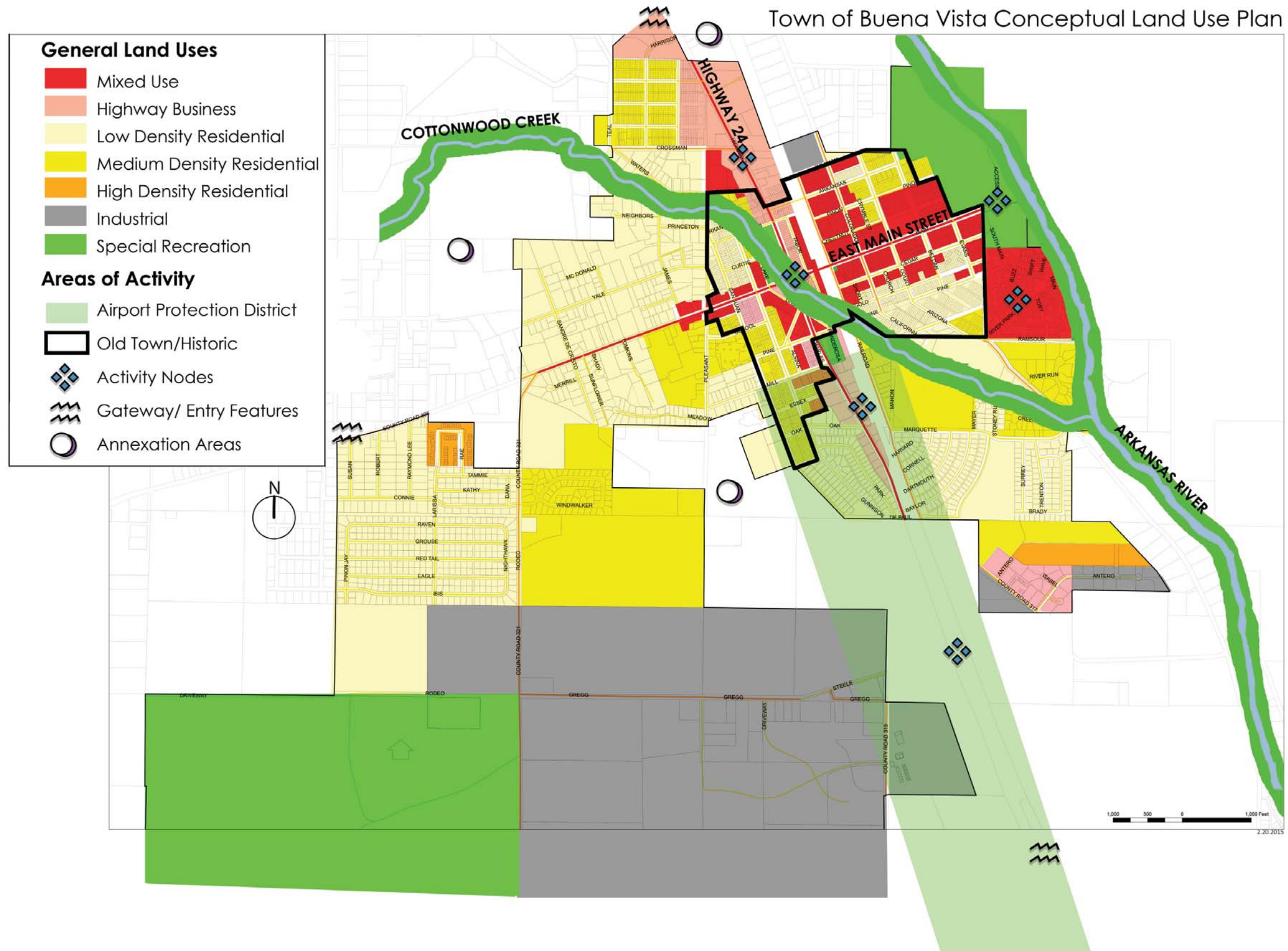






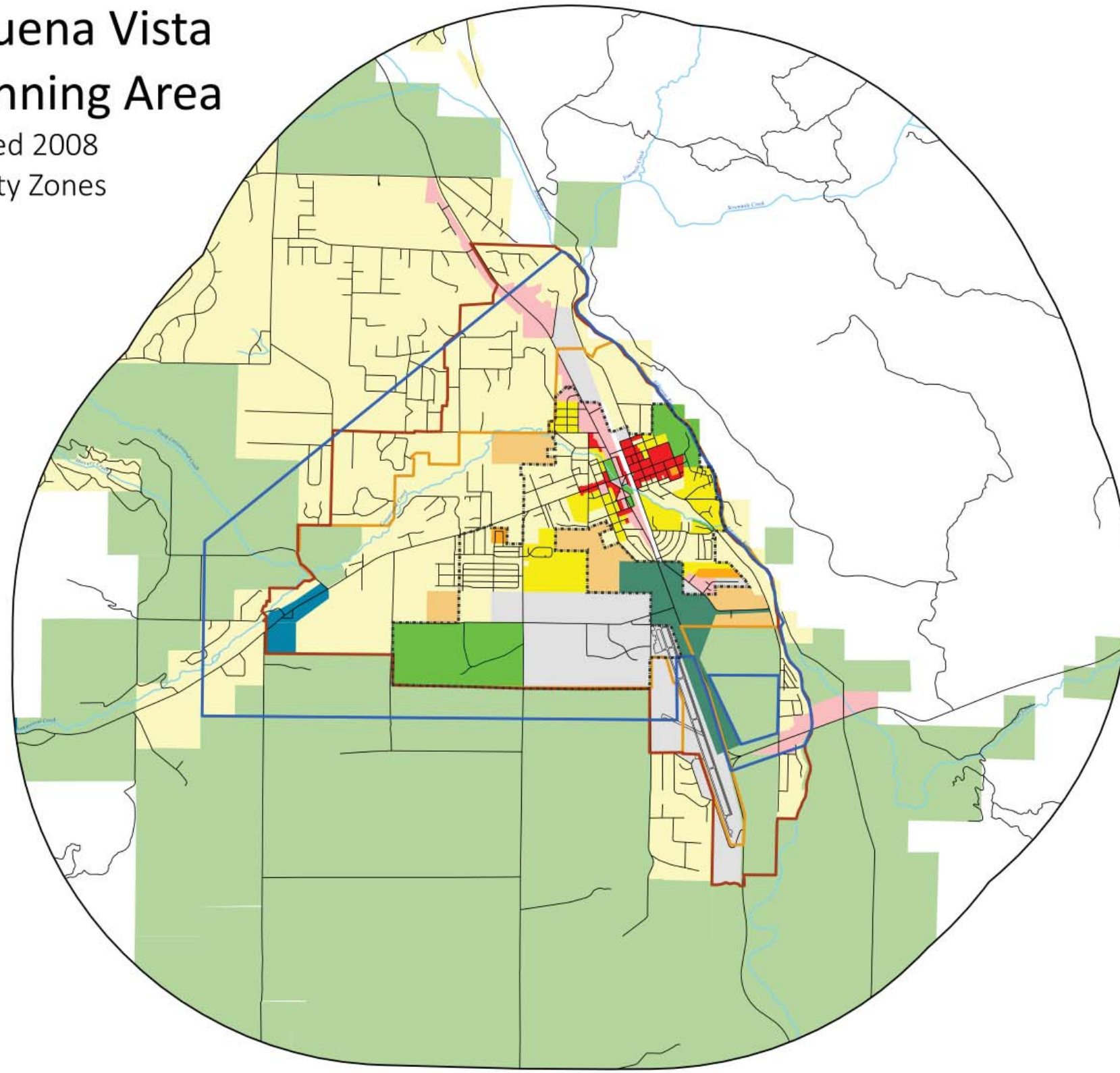
The image below is composed of words that appeared in the Buena Vista survey results and public outreach meetings. The size of each word indicates the frequency of its use, thus its importance to the community.





Town of Buena Vista 3 Mile Planning Area

Zoning + Proposed 2008
Land Use Intensity Zones
November 2014



Legend

- 3 Mile Planning Area
- Town Boundary
- Water Service Boundary
- Streets

Area of Desired Growth

- 2010
- 2014

Town Zone Districts

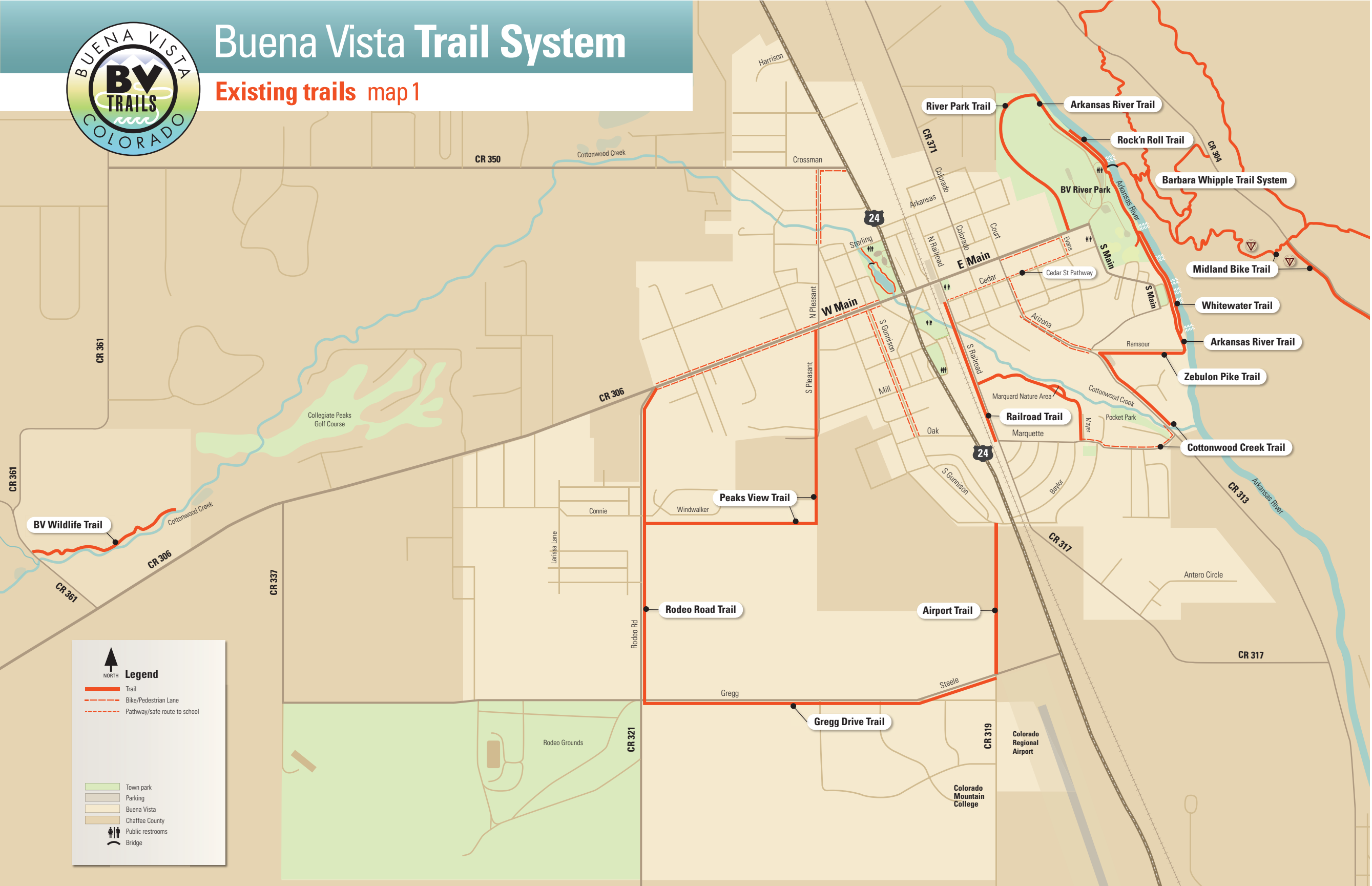
- B-1 General Business
- B-2 Highway Business
- I-1 Industrial
- R-1 Low-Density Residential
- R-2 General-Density Residential
- R-3 High-Density Residential
- S-1 Special Recreational

Proposed Intensity Zones

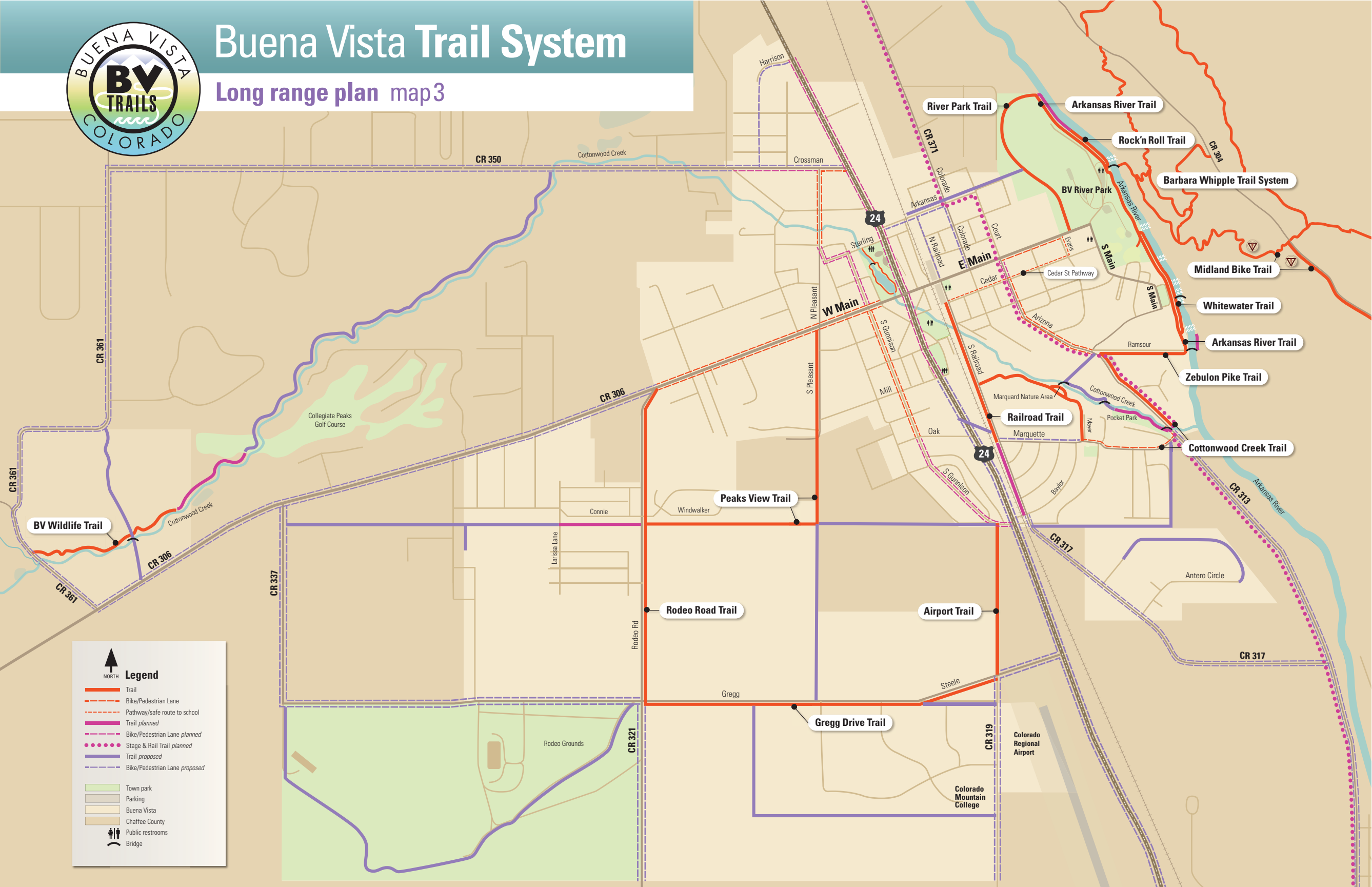
- Moderate Intensity
- Zero Intensity

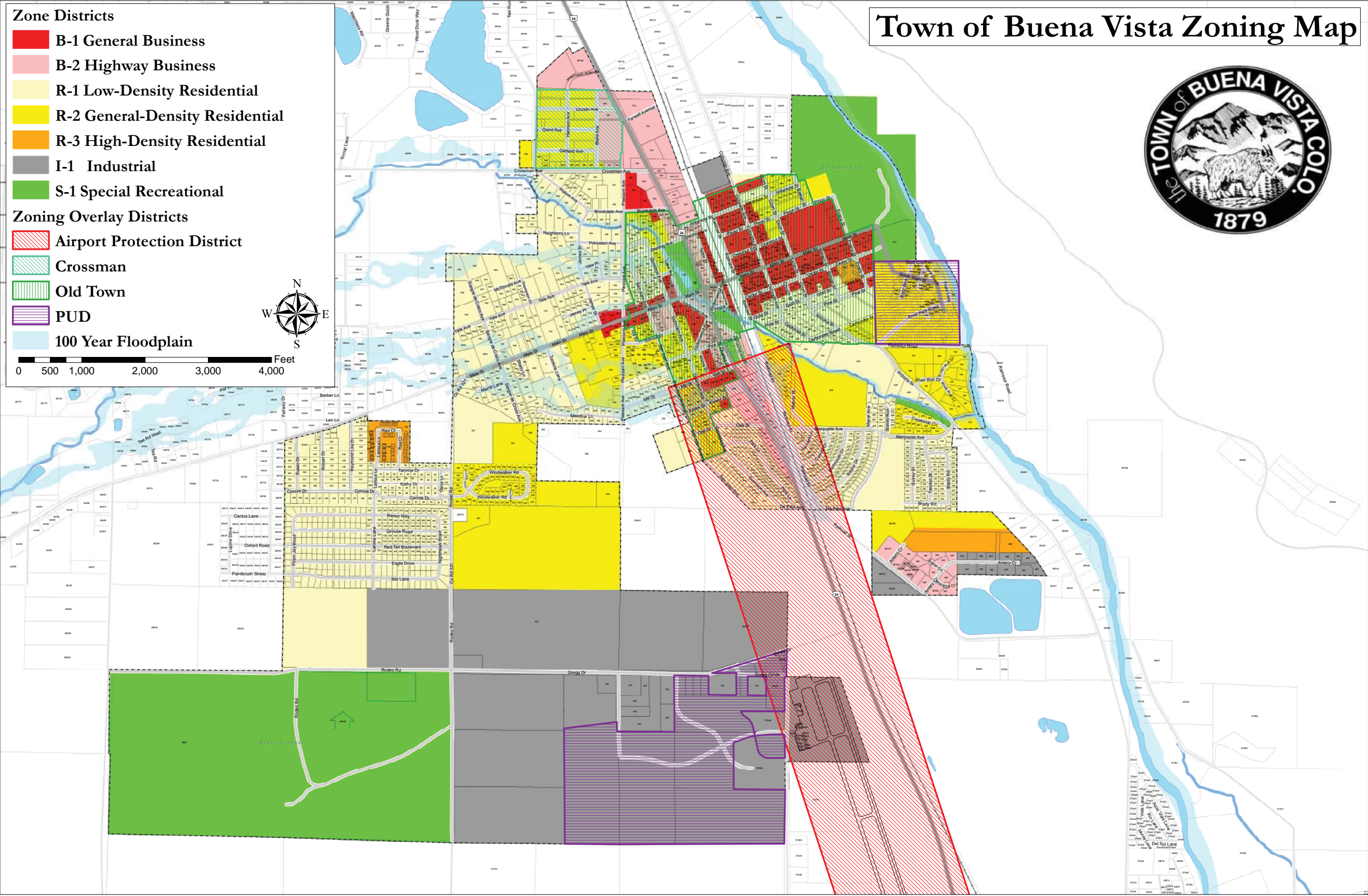
Chaffee County Zones

- Recreational
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Rural Commercial/Recreational
- PUD
- Residential
- Rural





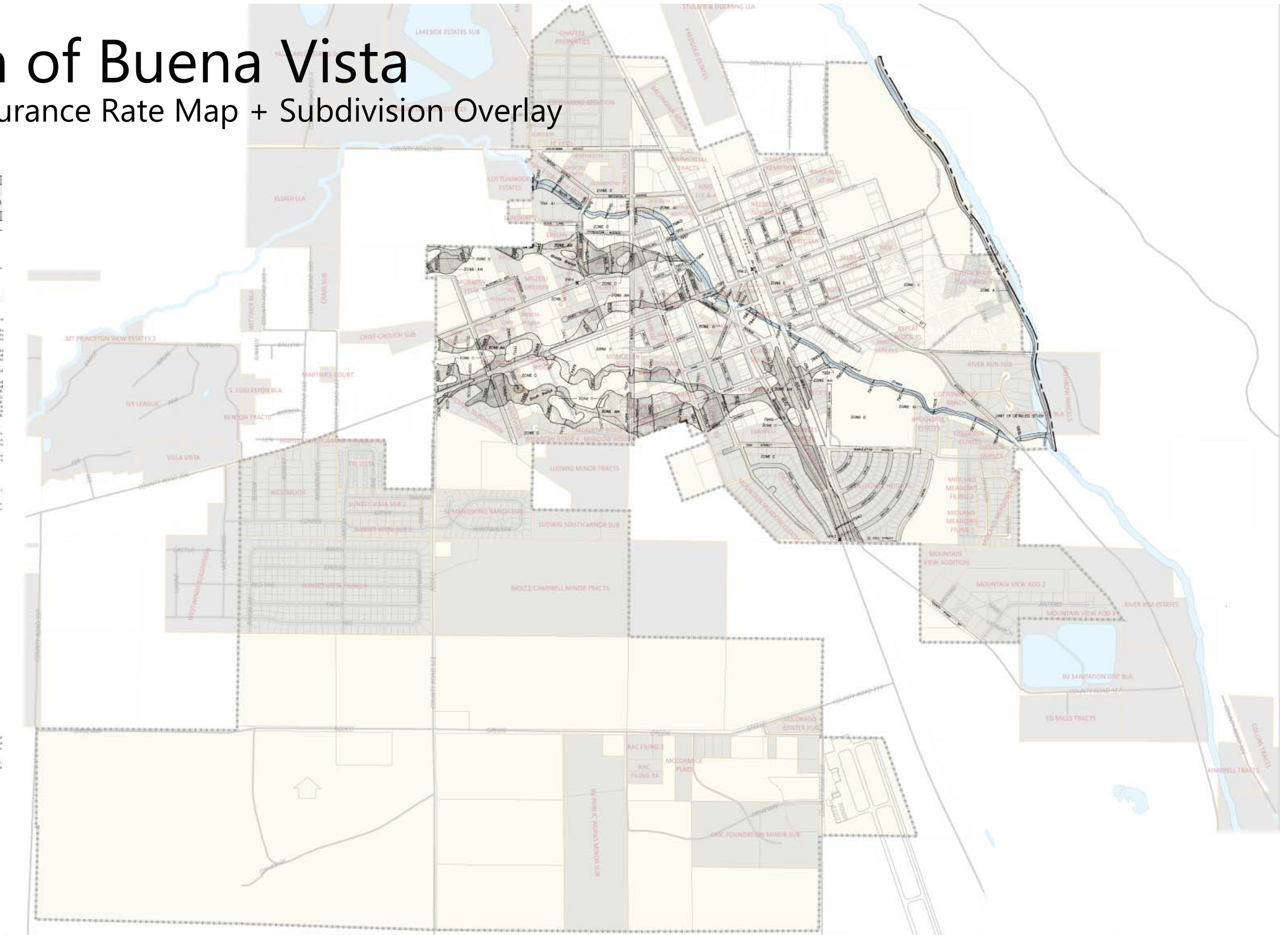




05/30/2014

Town of Buena Vista

Flood Insurance Rate Map + Subdivision Overlay



ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY

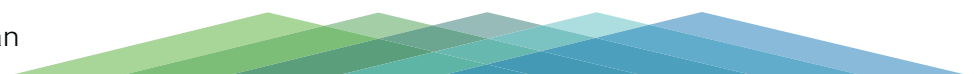
Chapter 3 - Developing the Economy	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
Short-term (accomplish in years 1-2)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buena Vista will continue to partner with the Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Program committees, Chaffee County Economic Development Corp., and review recommendations in the 2013 DCI Downtown Community Assessment. 	Buena Vista Chamber, Chaffee County Economic Development Corp., and Town Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buena Vista will develop commercial design standards in the Land Use Code applicable to appropriate zone districts, including the Highway 24 corridor and downtown core, to ensure that commercial development complements and promotes the Town's desired image. 	Planning and Zoning Commission, Town Staff, and Buena Vista Heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buena Vista will review current Home Occupation provisions in the Land Use Code to ensure that these provisions are sufficiently business-friendly while, at the same time, offering adequate protection to ensure that residential neighborhoods are not unduly impacted by home businesses. 	Planning and Zoning and Town Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review provisions in the Land Use Code and provide educational materials to facilitate code compliance for new businesses. 	Town Staff and Planning and Zoning Commission
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and implement recommendations of the Airport Master Plan currently in progress. 	Airport Advisory Board, Town Staff, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the 2014 Trails Master Plan recommendations. 	Trails and Recreation Advisory Boards, Town Staff, Board of Trustees, and Planning and Zoning Commission, NC3, GARNA, BLM, and the U.S. Forest service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the recommendations of a feasibility study currently in progress for a Recreation and Events Center that would include additional community amenities, if feasible. 	Town Staff and the Recreation Advisory Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop recreational programs and facilities that complement the activities of the School District. 	Town Staff, Recreation Advisory Board, and the Buena Vista School District

Chapter 3 - Developing the Economy (short-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the School District to develop an affordable housing program to attract and retain high-quality teachers. 	Buena Vista School District, Town Staff, Habitat for Humanity, Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments, Chaffee County and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the current fee-in-lieu schedule with the intention of increasing the fees for new market-rate residential development. 	Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize CMC for its role as the third least expensive college provider in the United States, for its “concurrent enrollment” program that guarantees acceptance at Colorado colleges, and for its keeping higher education more affordable. 	Colorado Mountain College and Town Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate pop-up retail in vacant storefront locations. 	Downtown Merchant Association, Main Street, Town Staff, Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider providing additional mixed-use districts and revise mixed-use provisions in the Land Use Code for the Old-Town Zone Overlay to allow for easier installation of mixed uses. 	Town Staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Downtown Revitalization Group for the possible formation of a Downtown Development Authority (DDA). 	Downtown Merchants Association, Main Street and Town Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Main Street Board to form a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and otherwise implement recommendations of the Downtown Colorado Inc. study. 	Main Street, Downtown Merchants Association and Town Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop general guidelines for desired development that would require Town expenditure for infrastructure. 	Town Staff and the Board of Trustees



Chapter 3 - Developing the Economy (short-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to study the Civic Center project as a valuable community facility and key entry element to the historic downtown. 	Town Staff and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue reviewing potential infrastructure, amenity, and beautification efforts for Main Street, including bicycle racks, other street furniture, and enhanced landscaping. 	Town Staff, the Beautification Advisory Board, Main Street, Downtown Merchants Association, the Tree and Recreation Advisory Boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve public outreach so that citizens understand the value and importance of streetscape improvements for the overall economic vitality of the East Main Street corridor and the historic downtown. 	Town Staff, Main Street, Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review implementation of the CDOT Access Control Plan to ensure that specific attention is given to enhanced accessibility to East Main Street. 	Town Staff, CDOT, Main Street and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the recommendations of the wayfinding and branding project currently in progress. 	Town Staff, the Beautification Advisory Board, and the Board of Trustees
Long-term (accomplish in years 3-5)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buena Vista will continue to support and promote whitewater-related tourism. 	Town Staff, Recreation Advisory Board, Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town will seek to identify and include year-round recreational opportunities to support businesses in town. 	Town Staff, Recreation Advisory Board, GARN, BLM, and the Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the recently approved airport business plan that will ensure the long-range success of the airport facility. 	Airport Advisory Board, Town Staff and the Board of Trustees

Chapter 3 - Developing the Economy (long-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and promote appropriate uses at the Airport Business Park that will promote airport use and general economic development. 	Airport Advisory Board, Town Staff and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buena Vista will work with its Recreation Advisory Board and staff of the Department of Parks and Recreation to develop recreational programs for families and local residents. 	Town Staff and the Recreation Advisory Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the School District to acquire grant funding to restore the old gymnasium behind the Courthouse as a community events and gathering place. 	Buena Vista School District, Town Staff, Main Street and Buena Vista Heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the School District to identify an appropriate location for a new high school facility, and to the extent permissible, support a ballot issue for its construction. Note: During public participation activities, there was considerable discussion as to whether a new high school should be located in the current high school location. The current location would promote convenient accessibility. Relocation to the outskirts of town could provide more land for expanded facilities, but would require more extensive infrastructure and transportation activity. 	Buena Vista School District and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with CMC to develop and enhance programs that support attracting new businesses and promoting skills for qualified employees. 	Town Staff, Chaffee County Economic Development Corp., and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support activities to host special events and conferences in Buena Vista. 	Town Staff, Recreation Department, Recreation Advisory Board, and the BV Chamber of Commerce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider implementing a Recapture and Assessment program for commercial and residential development located in areas that lack infrastructure. 	Town Staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, Planning Department, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up a business support network which would provide guidance for new businesses on the Land Use Code requirements and other regulatory processes. 	Town Staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Planning Department



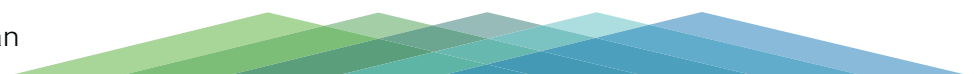
Chapter 3 - Developing the Economy (long-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study the development of a new Civic Center building to be located on East Main Street. 	Town Staff and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the railroad ownership to develop a plan for the permanent and attractive installation of parking facilities on the railroad right-of-way adjacent to East Main Street. 	Town Staff, Beautification Advisory Board, and Main Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to pursue a new Civic Center in the historic downtown. 	Town Staff and the Board of Trustees
Chapter 4 - Housing: Accessible, Affordable & Aesthetic	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
Short-term (accomplish in years 1-2)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure consistent enforcement of the Land Use Code. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a streamlined and easy to use Land Use Code. 	Town Staff and the Planning Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate affordable housing policies in the Land Use Code, including incentives to provide affordable housing. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create opportunities to educate the community on growth, affordable housing, and planning trends to ensure community support for new housing. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare an ongoing needs assessment for affordable housing. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of Trustees

Chapter 4 - Housing: Accessible, Affordable & Aesthetic (short-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish new zoning districts that encourage mixed-use development, greater density, and address affordable housing. 	Town Staff and the Planning Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New planning trends such as tiny homes and live-work units should be implemented. 	Town Staff and the Planning Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop dimensional standards that will support in-fill development and neighborhood compatibility. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Planning and Zoning Commission
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a fee and review system that favors re-development and infill development in the commercial core area. 	Town Staff, Planning Department and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove code barriers on East Main and ensure suitable infrastructure for mixed-use development exists in the core area. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve development standards with an emphasis on building design, location, massing, and form. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Planning and Zoning, Buena Vista Heritage, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop parking standards that will support new development and ensure neighborhood compatibility. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update landscaping standards to make them more user-friendly and improve enforcement. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support historic preservation efforts and encourage new housing design to respect the design of historical resources (See Chapter 8). 	Town Staff, Buena Vista Heritage, and the Planning and Zoning Commission



Chapter 4 - Housing: Accessible, Affordable & Aesthetic (short-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing groups working on affordable housing should work with local government initiatives. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Habitat for Humanity, and the Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an assessment of long term vs. short term private rentals within Buena Vista to determine the degree to which private homes and apartments are listed with rental agencies. 	Town Staff and the Planning Department
Long-term (accomplish in years 3-5)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage public-private partnerships and clearly define required fees for expansion of infrastructure. 	Town Staff, Public Works Department, and the Planning Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish criteria for Town expenditures for infrastructure in desired locations. 	Town Staff, Public Works Department, Planning Department, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban agriculture and renewable energy should be explored. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Sangre De Cristo Electrical Cooperative, and the board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentives shall be provided to developers to encourage the development of affordable housing. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update ordinances and Land Use Code provisions licensing private tourist rentals and regulating their use. 	Town Staff and the Planning Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider a short-term lodging tax. 	Town Staff and the Board of Trustees

Chapter 4 - Housing: Accessible, Affordable & Aesthetic (long-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and continually evaluate a threshold or optimal level for short term rentals within the community. 	Town Staff and the Planning Department
Chapter 5 - Transportation In All Forms	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
Short-term (accomplish in years 1-2)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide development standards on crosswalk design, wayfinding signage, lighting, and landscaping to improve safety and the streetscape aesthetic. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and advisory boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide public information on the value of curb extensions (often called bump-outs) and other streetscape amenities that may reduce parking, and enhance these amenities with additional landscaping and outdoor commercial activity. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and advisory boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher density development will only be located where existing or planned road facilities are appropriately built and designed to serve it. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future development will be required to pay its fair share of the cost streets improvements made necessary by each development through a professionally-calculated impact fee system. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivision standards in the Land Use Code rewrite should be updated to require all future development to address connectivity to a sidewalk or trail system. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Trails and Recreation Advisory Boards, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alley access should be improved and utilized wherever possible instead of curb cuts. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department



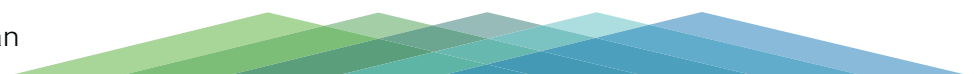
Chapter 5 - Transportation In All Forms (short-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage side and rear parking in new residential development. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with Beautification Committee efforts, pursue public art projects as a means of providing “brand identity” for the community. 	Town Staff, Beautification Advisory Board, and the Chaffee County Council on the Arts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host a design competition for designs for the entrance monumentation to encourage local artists and designers to submit ideas that speak of the uniqueness of the community. 	Town Staff, Beautification Advisory Board, Chaffee County Council on the Arts, and Main Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support existing initiatives, such as bike lane stripping. 	Town Staff, Trails and Recreation Advisory Board, Public Works Department, and the Planning Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain bike lanes year round. 	Town Staff, Trails and Recreation Advisory Board, Public Works Department, and the Planning Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicize the popularity of biking in the community and provide educational opportunities aimed at creating safe biking practices, including safe interaction with motor vehicles. 	Town Staff, Trails and Recreation Advisory Board, Public Works Department, and the Planning Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalization of setback requirements, architectural guidelines, and signage should also be completed. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study existing routes to school and document missing segments or dangerous conditions. 	Town Staff, Trails and Recreation Advisory Board, Public Works Department, and the Recreation Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with parent groups and the schools to identify concerns and opportunities. 	Town Staff, Trails and Recreation Advisory Board, Public Works Department, Buena Vista School District, and the Recreation Department

Chapter 5 - Transportation In All Forms	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
Long-term (accomplish in years 3-5)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New streets will be designed with equal consideration for the integration with the existing network, connectivity to amenities, visual character, and safety. 	Town Staff, Trails and Recreation Advisory Board, Public Works Department, Planning Department, and the Recreation Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide adequate alternative parking for East Main Street, focusing on the development of the railroad land for this purpose. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking should be provided and parking regulations enforced to facilitate public transit. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Police Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider pursuing remote parking of automobiles and the creation of a transit center. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study the creation of additional routes, such as a trail along Cottonwood Creek, and the conversion of existing streets to encourage multi-modal transportation. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Trails and Recreation Advisory Boards, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The functionality of the improvements constructed in connection with the CDOT Access Control Plan will be monitored during and after construction. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to sidewalks, crosswalks, and formalizing existing bike lanes should be pursued along the Highway 24 corridor. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing signalized crossings should be improved to ensure safe and comfortable use. 	Town Staff and the Public Works Department



Chapter 5 - Transportation In All Forms (long-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider opportunities to attract more charter service and/or possible commercial service. 	Airport Staff and the Airport Advisory Board
Chapter 6 - Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Spaces	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
Short-term (accomplish in years 1-2)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access and wayfinding signage, for trails West of Town, such as the Colorado Trail, fourteener trails, and alpine lake hikes. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Recreation Department, and the Recreation and Trails Advisory Boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to foster and enhance important partnerships with other jurisdictions and organizations including the Bureau of Land Management, Chaffee County, the Northern Chaffee County Connections (AKA "NC3"), and the Greater Arkansas River Nature Association (AKA "GARNA"). 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Recreation Department, and the Recreation and Trails Advisory Boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop priorities for implementation of the 2014 Trails Master Plan. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Chaffee County, Recreation Department, and the Recreation and Trails Advisory Boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review trail easement criteria in the Land Use Code to ensure that new subdivisions provide adequate easements for trail facilities. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and the Recreation Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement the 2010 Recreation Facilities Master Plan. The Town has already completed many of the short range proposed improvements and is in the process of working towards the long range improvements through planning efforts such as Recreation Event Center Feasibility & Architectural Study. 	Town Staff, Public Works Department, Recreation Advisory Board, and the Recreation Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Beautification Committee's plans to beautify and revitalize the Town through thoughtful and manageable projects such as a xeriscape demonstration garden. These projects can be realized through volunteer support and are a great opportunity to strengthen and educate the community and enhance the environment. 	Town Staff, Beautification Advisory Board, Main Street, and the Public Works Department

Chapter 6 - Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Spaces (short-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define a threshold in the Land Use Code rewrite for the size of new development that will require actual land dedication rather than cash-in-lieu. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore and identify priorities for the acquisition of open space that will provide for trail development and continuity. 	Town Staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Recreation and Trails Advisory Boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the acquisition of open space parcels along Cottonwood Creek and other key areas of recreational value and environmental sensitivity. 	Town Staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Recreation and Trails Advisory Boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the 2002 Town of Buena Vista Planting Guide and reference it in the Land Use Code rewrite. This document will cultivate a naturalized, low water use, and low maintenance landscape throughout town. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and the Tree and Beautification Advisory Boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians crossing and traveling on Highway 24. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and the Recreation Department
Long-term (accomplish in years 3-5)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access to BLM land East of Town. The high traffic to these popular trail systems results in pedestrian and bike conflicts at the bridge. Improvements and/or a secondary access should be a priority in future trail planning efforts. 	Town Staff, BLM, Recreation and Trails Advisory Boards, NC3, the Public Works Department, and the Recreation Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve connectivity between existing parks, particularly between the four large community parks, Town, and the Rodeo Grounds. 	Town Staff, Recreation and Trails Advisory Boards, Public Works Department, and the Recreation Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The town should look for opportunities to create parks in existing neighborhoods that lack park space within walking distance of the general population. These efforts should focus on utilizing centrally located vacant lots within the neighborhood. 	Town Staff, BLM, Recreation and Trails Advisory Boards, Public Works Department, and the Recreation Department



Chapter 6 - Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Spaces (long-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for opportunities along Highway 24 and East Main Street to install small gardens, planters, and shade trees to improve aesthetic quality and enhance the pedestrian experience. 	Town Staff, Public Works Department, Beatification and Tree Advisory Boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buena Vista should use green building materials, renewable energy sources, native plant species, and energy efficient operations whenever feasible with park and trail development. 	Town Staff, Public Works Department, Beatification, Trails and Tree Advisory Boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The park, recreation, trails and open space programs will incorporate educational features and volunteer participation into all aspects of the system so as to further engage and inform the community and visitors of the extent and purpose of the programs. 	Town Staff, Public Works Department, Recreation Department, Planning Department and the Trails Advisory Boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop pathways detached from the street instead of sidewalks, when appropriate. 	Town Staff, Public Works Department, Trails Advisory Board, and the Planning Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand on the existing network of bike lanes throughout Town. 	Town Staff, Public Works Department, Trails and Recreation Advisory Boards, Recreation Department, and the Planning Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue opportunity to create a connected trail along Cottonwood Creek through town that would provide great recreational value as well as deter building in the floodplain. 	Town Staff, Public Works Department, Trails and Recreation Advisory Boards, Recreation Department, and the Planning Department
Chapter 7 - Respecting the Environment	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
Short-term (accomplish in years 1-2)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish land use and building code requirements that minimize energy and water use. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Sangre De Cristo Cooperative, and the Water Advisory Board

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize sustainable design standards such as the U.S. Department of Energy's "Building American" program. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and the Sangre De Cristo Cooperative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use renewable energy sources and locally-produced materials for new recreational developments. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Recreation advisory Board, Recreation Department, and the Sangre De Cristo Cooperative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide education opportunities and sponsor forums to encourage the community to interact with other members of the community and local government to discuss environmental issues. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Recreation advisory Board, Recreation Department, and the Sangre De Cristo Cooperative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local initiatives and neighborhood level activities aimed at addressing some area of environmental concern. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Recreation advisory Board, Recreation Department, and the Sangre De Cristo Cooperative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate increased density, environmentally sensitive design, and historic preservation concepts into the Land Use Code. 	Town Staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Buena Vista Heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In connection with regional planning activities, the Town of Buena Vista will promote topics such as transportation planning, infrastructure improvements, waste management, and resource conservation to be considered and incorporated in regional planning activities. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Chaffee County, Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments, Recreation advisory Board, Recreation Department, and the Sangre De Cristo Cooperative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategies to protect the Town's watersheds as part of the Water Resource Master Plan. 	Town Staff, Planning Zoning Commission, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and strengthen the Watershed Protection District. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Water Advisory Board, BLM, U.S. Forest Service, and Chaffee County



Chapter 7 - Respecting the Environment (short-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the recommendations made in the 2014 Water Resource Master Plan are be followed and implemented, when appropriate and possible. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Board of Trustees, and the Water Advisory Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage density, infill, and adaptive reuse of structures. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Planning and Zoning Commission, and Buena Vista Heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage historic preservation efforts. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Planning and Zoning Commission, and Buena Vista Heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include provisions in the Land Use Code that require sustainable development practices. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Water Advisory Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage flexibility in the Land Use Code to provide for emerging concepts in construction techniques and land use that can demonstrate an ability to minimize environmental impacts. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and the Planning and Zoning Commission
Long-term (accomplish in years 3-5)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue sustainable development standards that simultaneously consider the financial, environmental, and social impacts of decisions prior to implementation. 	All Town Departments and Advisory Board including the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the extent of use of pesticides, herbicides and other toxic chemicals, and minimize their use wherever possible. 	Town Staff and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint Environmental Advisory Committee to work with Planning & Zoning Commission. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and the Planning and Zoning Commission

Chapter 7 - Respecting the Environment (long-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare an Environmental Needs Assessment Survey to obtain public input. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on Needs Assessment findings, draft a vision statement with broad goals and specific objectives. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft an Action Strategy to put Environmental Action Plan into practice. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt the Environmental Action Plan. Implement, monitor, and evaluate the plan on an annual basis and make revisions as necessary. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop storm water management requirements. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and the Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline accepted environmentally sensitive building practices and materials. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, and the Board of Trustees

Chapter 8 - History and Heritage	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
Short-term (accomplish in years 1-2)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpretive signage regarding historic buildings and areas will be installed in an effort to educate the public and visitors of the history of Buena Vista. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Buena Vista Heritage, and Main Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the history of Buena Vista, identify important eras, events, and figures that will be a resource for the community and the local government in connection with historic preservation. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Buena Vista Heritage, and Main Street



Chapter 8 - History and Heritage (short-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designate a key staff person to provide information on the range of economic incentives available to historically designated properties. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Buena Vista Heritage, and Main Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buena Vista will create and codify regulations to govern a historic district or resources. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Buena Vista Heritage, and Main Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buena Vista will create an ordinance to review demolition or remodeling requests for historic resources identified on the official list of historic or potentially historic buildings, places, or districts. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Buena Vista Heritage, and Main Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify specific districts based on shared historic preservation characteristics. Develop Land Use Code recommendations to provide for the compatibility of new structures in a historic context. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Buena Vista Heritage, and Main Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a historic resources survey to specifications adopted by History Colorado. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Buena Vista Heritage, and Main Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create criteria for historic designation of buildings, places, or districts. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Buena Vista Heritage, and Main Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Land Use Code recommendations to provide for the compatibility of new structures in a historic context. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Buena Vista Heritage, and Main Street
Chapter 8 - History and Heritage	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
Long-term (accomplish in years 3-5)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore mechanisms to pay for improvements to the Heritage Museum that will support year round use of the facility. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Buena Vista Heritage

Chapter 8 - History and Heritage (long-term continued)	
	<i>Responsible Party</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A position paper will be created that reviews the history of Buena Vista, identifies important eras, events, and figures and will be a resource for the community and the local government in connection with historic preservation. 	Town Staff, Planning Department, Buena Vista Heritage, and Main Street





OVERVIEW OF MEETINGS AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

The following is an overview of the various meetings and public outreach efforts that were held in connection with the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update for the Town of Buena Vista.

Stan Clauson Associates, Inc. (SCA), with Comprehensive Plan partners Clarion Associates (Clarion) and BBC Research & Consulting (BBC), were selected following submitting a response to the Town's Request for Proposals (RFP) on 9 January 2015. SCA and their partners were interviewed by Town of Buena Vista Staff on 27 January 2015. Notice of Award was provided by the Town of Buena Vista on 10 February 2015.



Kick-off Meeting – 20 February 2015

The consultants initiated the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update with a Comprehensive Plan Kick-off meeting on 20 February 2015, held at the Community Center. Staff met with the consultants to discuss the scope of work and schedule, review previous planning efforts and community feedback, and discuss the issues facing the community. Staff also provided information on important physical features of the Town, recently completed and ongoing development projects, and other planning matters of importance.

Staff indicated that the Town is currently working to become a Colorado Certified Local Government for historic preservation. Among the efforts being pursued in connection with Certified Local Government status was the preparation of a historic preservation ordinance, appointment of a Historic Preservation Commission, and the possible delineation of a historic overlay district would be pursued in order to achieve this certification.

The various types of public outreach for the Comprehensive Plan update were discussed, including:

- Using the Town website and a dedicated Facebook page. Staff would be responsible for posting materials provided by the consultant team on the Town website, whereas the consultants would provide the Facebook page;
- Focus group meetings would be held with interested citizens and members of Town committees;
- Formation of a volunteer Steering Committee to guide development of the Plan;
- Public outreach meetings open to the public;
- Continuation of the Town's "Post Cards from the Future" program; and
- Outreach by Town staff to high school students.

Particular attention was given to accommodating the participation of working residents and those at home with children in public outreach efforts.

Issues to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan were discussed. Staff provided insight on existing conflicts within the community, as well as perceived issues with new development. Other topics were also discussed, such as funding sources for infrastructure improvements, cell towers, managing land use conflicts, sidewalk continuity, enforcement of landscaping and fence regulations, and providing guidance on developing trends in land use. Clarion reviewed with staff specific issues to be addressed in the Land Use Code update, including trends in how land use approvals are granted in Buena Vista, and issues of code enforcement and the granting of variances.

Luncheon Meeting – 20 February 2015

Following the Staff/Consultant meeting, a luncheon with Mayor Joel Benson, along with representatives from the Board of Trustees, Planning & Zoning Commission, Main Street Committees, staff, and consultants took place. Two PowerPoint presentations were offered: one prepared by Town staff describing the purpose and process for a Comprehensive Plan update; and the second introducing the consultant team and its approach to preparing the Comprehensive Plan update.

Comments and questions followed the presentations, including those from the Mayor and Town Trustees, and Planning & Zoning Commission members. Mayor Benson stated that the existing Comprehensive Master Plan needs more than tweaking, rather it needs to be rewritten from scratch. He continued that he would prefer the new Comprehensive Plan provide “what does it feel like,” rather than focus on specific infrastructure upgrades. These comments were echoed by Trustee Phillip Pucket, when he urged the consultant team to emphasize quality of life concerns rather than specific improvements. Following comments and questions, participants were invited to post comments on three maps the consultant team provided. These comments were meant to provide an initial look at the issues and opportunities of interest to the community.

Windshield Tour of Town – 20 February 2015

Following the Kick-off Meeting, staff took the consultant team on an auto tour of the town to visit locations that were discussed in the morning meetings, areas of concern, and provide a general orientation.

Interim Teleconference Check-ins with Staff – March 2015

Following a review of existing plans and regulations, conference calls were held on March 5th and March 20th to discuss the make-up of the Steering Committee, preparation for the Focus Group Meetings, receive an update on the Airport Master Plan and airport operations, and interview the departing public works director.

Public Open House – 7 April 2015

In conjunction with Focus Group meetings to be held later in the day, the consultants conducted an open house meeting, which included the PowerPoint presentation prepared by Town staff on the scope and intention of the Comprehensive Plan Update. In attendance at this open house were members of the community, Town staff, and officials from the Board of Trustees and Planning & Zoning Commission. The kick-off meeting held in February was reviewed and attendees were asked to identify key concerns that they hoped to see addressed in the Comprehensive Plan Update. Some of the statements received include the following:

- Vibrancy / diversity
- Recreation / event center
- Walkability
- Vibrant Main Street
- Workforce housing / affordable housing
- Celebrate heritage / history
- Small-town feeling
- Sidewalk connections
- Safe routes to schools

Focus Group Meetings – 7 April 2015

Focus group meetings were held simultaneously throughout the day covering the following topics:

1. Open Space, Trails, and Recreation;
2. Business Owners and Economic Development;
3. Infrastructure and Water;
4. Arts and Events;
5. Transportation;
6. General Land Use Code concerns;
7. Heritage group;
8. School parent group; and
9. Signage.

The focus group sessions were moderated by various members of the consultant team. Maps and potential topics for discussion were presented at each focus group meeting. Moderators took notes and lead the generally far-ranging discussions. Here are some of the key issues discussed at the various focus groups:

Open Space, Trails, and Recreation

- Parks are an important community asset
- Connections between County and Town parks, trails, and recreation systems are essential
- Trails goals should include:
 - Interconnectivity
 - User friendly construction
 - Connect to regional trails to the West (i.e. the Colorado Trail)
 - River Park Trail – complete connections in park
- Trails concerns included:
 - Safe crossings to school
 - Sidewalks are fragmented
- Encourage trail building by volunteers
- Emphasize bicycling and hiking within the Buena Vista 3 Mile Planning Area
- Contemporary updates of equipment
- Parks should be planned and developed with proximity to development and population in mind
- Area of town West of Hwy 24 is generally park-poor
- Cooperation with developers for park construction
- Emphasis should be to maintain existing facilities
- Facility planning prioritization is important

Business Owners and Economic Development

- Buena Vista continues to grow, and weathered the recession quite well
- There is a need to improve the relationships between the business community and town government
- Town government is perceived to be “nitpicky” without being able to point to specific regulatory provisions.

- Housing market is strong in Buena Vista, with homes below \$300K an especially fast-moving market
- Long-term rental market is tight
- Workforce housing is extremely tight and an increasing barrier to the community's success
- Retirees make up a large portion of Buena Vista's population and affordable housing needs to address this
- Drivers of the economy in Buena Vista include:
 - Climax – this was debatable by the participants
 - State Penitentiary – 800+ jobs
 - Tourism & Recreation
- South Main is a wonderful example of new development in Buena Vista
- Need more design standards in Buena Vista to protect character
- Signage is a big problem along highway– size and number of signs, lack of uniformity
- Town Hall should relocate to the museum, creating more of a Town center while using an historic structure
- US 24 and Main should be upgraded as a major gateway for the community
- Town should court new, non-seasonal jobs
- Promote winter recreation activities and events to Denver Market
- There is no economic ladder, no next job
- Airport business park could accommodate manufacturing or non-tourism businesses
- Rural retirees are a good source of volunteers and help; town should recognize their contribution
- No apparent interest in annexation by either side
- Build for the next generation; keep them here

Infrastructure and Water

- Level of service of streets and parking outside of tourist season is okay, but summer has high traffic and congestion
- Need signage directing visitors to parking
- Consider centralized parking lots
- Existing bump outs now make driving large trucks and pulling trailers difficult
- Consider improvements to the Main/Hwy. 24 intersection
- Pedestrian improvements should worry about locals, not just visitors
- Transit center should be attractive but avoid creating second nucleus of commercial activity
- Provide more opportunities for bicycle parking and bike lanes on busy streets
- Bike ridership is strong – some use as primary means of transportation while in town
- Keep main arterials for cars
- Concerning stormwater, consider artistic design while providing for water quality
- Water conservation should be pursued
- Focus on protection of upstream resources
- Require infrastructure with new housing but look at specific conditions for who should pay for it
- Explore public/private partnerships
- Let affordable housing define itself and foster new ideas and creativity for providing affordable housing
- Provide a senior center

- Need for year round amenities, particularly an auditorium
- Protect historic resources but without creating a burden on owner
- Consider migration routes and new development

Arts and Events

- Buena Vista is a community that supports and provides for arts
- Arts and events should be designed for the community and supported by visitors
- Town should promote events that symbolize the history and culture of Buena Vista
- Comp Plan should support all of the art forms occurring in Buena Vista: visual, music, dance, etc.
- Arts and events should target all age groups, appeal to the family unit, and be affordable
- Install benches, murals, water features, etc.
- Potential to have an exhibition and then retain some works
- Encourage local artists to create outdoor art
- Clean up the Hwy 24 corridor and make it more demonstrative of Buena Vista character.
- Consider a Gateway sculpture on Hwy 24 to announce arrival to town
- Local orchestra, Walden Chamber Music Society, Boys and Girls club are local organizations that bring the community together
- Art classes provided in the public schools curriculum are the main artistic outlet for many children
- Parades could be improved, for example, prizes for the best float or encourage bystanders to dance in the street
- Lacking programs for kids
- Artists are pushing for a public facility for classes for kids
- Performing arts currently use schools and churches, and need dedicated event space
- Live / work studio space is needed

Transportation

- Focus on provisions for pedestrian safety and bicycle usage
- No significant interest relating to extending road pavements or facilitating traffic movement
- Foster non-motorized culture
- Safety for cyclists and pedestrians is the main concern
- Providing "Safe Routes to School" is very important
- The bike lanes and multi-use trails should be plowed and kept clear of snow
- Easily understandable multi-modal system would be a welcome improvement
- Encourage pedestrian use in downtown core by providing remote parking
- Functional art can encourage multi-modal use
- Public parking should be clearly identified
- Certain corridors for continuous sidewalks should be prioritized for completion
- Implementation of CDOT Access Control Plan improvements should be as soon as possible and closely monitored by the Town
- Transit Center idea would need to be pedestrian / bicycle friendly
- Balance long term residents' desire for no change and more forward thinking desires of newer residents

- Educate both drivers and bicyclists on proper road sharing
- Buena Vista probably doesn't have the population for more public transit at this point
- Hwy 24 and the railroad tracks combine to make a double barrier against East-West multi-modal transportation and Town government should reach out to the railroad for improvements to the informal parking areas on railroad property
- Main St. diagonal head-in parking is a safety concern
- A full Complete Streets evaluation for Buena Vista would be a good idea to identify appropriate areas to retrofit and define project
- Airport needs a better business plan for its operation.

General Land Use Concerns – Meeting #1

This meeting was conducted as a round robin responding to the question "What should be addressed through the Land Use Code update?" Highlights of this session included:

- Buena Vista is not opposed to greater density, where appropriate, and greater density should be mixed in throughout the community
- Parking is a huge issue in Buena Vista and we need more!
- Explore a central parking concept
- Need to allow for, and encourage tiny houses
- Explore cooperative housing ventures
- Co-housing should be allowed by right
- Community is split on their opinions of South Main
- Parking is a major issue; rafting company will exacerbate that
- Need a seamless transition from South Main, to East Main, to West Main
- We need to determine what historic is
- Design standards should support historic preservation and educate people on why it is important and how to comply
- Big box retail is threatening the mom-and-pop stores in Buena Vista
- Need to eliminate inconsistencies in code provisions
- The code should be encouraging better development
- Water taps are costly and this high cost is eating at the bottom line of doing business

Heritage and Historic Preservation Focus Group

- Buena Vista is to seeking to become a "Certified Local Government," which is a joint State of Colorado Historic Preservation Office and National Parks Service certification for historic preservation activities
- A definition for "Historic District" is needed, so Town citizens can understand its implications and potential benefits
- Other areas beside East Main Street that could benefit from landmarking activity were discussed
- Historic preservation activities are not necessarily limited only to buildings
- Infill projects adjacent to historic buildings need to be carefully considered
- Generally, a new building should be of its own time, but compatible with nearby historic resources
- The Buena Vista Hotel renovation was discussed as an example of generally good historic preservation

- The Comprehensive Plan should have an Historic Preservation element that will show the benefits of historic district regulation
- Historic Preservation is not just about regulation but should also include assistance with best management practices
- The South Main project has shown an example of carrying through on a specific architectural theme or palette
- Downtown historic structures were constructed with brick from a local mill in Buena Vista
- Possible historic resources include not only downtown historic buildings, but also a decorative native rock wall, irrigation structures, the railroad depot, and agricultural and mining sites
- Events are important
- The historic walking tour with numbered signage which has fallen into disuse was discussed and it was determined that new signage should be developed for historic properties
- Buena Vista Heritage owns five properties, including the Museum located in the old county courthouse

School / Parent Group

- Safe Routes to School a big concern particularly crossing at Main Street and Hwy. 24
- Lack of sidewalks and missing infrastructure are of concern
- Provide opportunities for more in town living
- Biking routes to school need greater connectivity
- Facilities for schools were discussed with high school/middle school relocation considered.
- Joint community/school facilities may have issues with serving alcohol
- Finding the sweet spot for the recreation center with consideration of location, activities, multi-seasonal use.
- Give kids something to do by providing a bowling alley, movie theatre, or reopening the Pearl
- Provide greater opportunities for after school activities with sensitivity to cost and consideration of additional sponsoring of activities by local business and other groups to assist in affordability
- Increase grant writing for activities
- Concerns with recreational marijuana use, particularly underage use
- Community needs greater education at an early stage and an open discussion on the topic.
- Concerns voiced about smoking at skate park and the need for increased safety at public parks
- Skateboard use was discussed with questions on where it can take place and issues with long boarding.
- Existing childcare is limited and located mostly in private homes
- Childcare is difficult particularly for teachers and there is a need to provide a regular daycare center
- The community needs to break down barriers and become a community for all ages!
- Provide more job opportunities to allow kids to stay
- Need affordable housing
- Historic preservation for future generations is important but don't cut something off just for preservation ("Working preservation").

Signage

- Murals and public art should have its own code section and specific design guidelines
- Signage regulations for commercial vs. non-commercial property needs clarification with Land Use Code loopholes minimized.
- Signage should be mindful of a coherent aesthetic with district specific guidelines with some flexibility
- Inconsistent regulation enforcement sets bad examples and breeds ill will and non-compliance
- Many signage issues exist along Hwy 24 corridor and on Main St.
- Educate business owners about signage regulations through the Chamber of Commerce by providing a checklist to people applying for a new business license
- Define “public art” vs. “signage”
- Clarify to allow for administrative review of signage applications
- Clarify what variances can be sought due to hardships
- Set standards for craftsmanship
- Prepare materials to solicit feedback on sign aesthetics at the public outreach meetings

General Land Use Concerns – Meeting #2

This was the second meeting conducted as a round robin responding to the question “What should be addressed through the Land Use Code update?” Highlights of this second session included:

- We can’t ignore what is going on around the outskirts of town
- Infrastructure costs for large-lot development far outweigh those of infill and redevelopment
- Paving requirements do not always make sense
- Landscaping requirements should be better defined and more flexible
- The new code should act to protect neighborhood character
- Design standards could be applied throughout the town, not just along Main Street
- The process for development approvals could be streamlined
- It is difficult to determine what is required for approvals, and what decisions are based on (approval criteria)

Survey – May 2015

Following the drafting and review by staff and the steering committee, copy of a community opinion survey was sent to residents of the Town of Buena Vista with their water bill on 30 April 2015. It was requested that only one individual from every household would complete the survey so that the survey accuracy could be maintained to the greatest degree possible. As an alternative to filling out the paper copy of the survey, respondents were able to visit the town’s website where a link to a web-based version of the survey was provided. All responses to the survey were requested to be received by 11 May 2015 though survey responses were received and accepted several weeks following the close of the survey period.

The community was strongly urged to take part in filling out the survey as the results would be very important in the creation of the new Comprehensive Plan. Once all survey responses were tabulated, both from paper copies and electronic submissions, 374 responses were received. Paper results were tabulated by manually inputting the responses into the web-based program. A report was then created of the combined responses and was made available in PDF format.

Issues with responding to several ranking questions, where respondents were asked to rank a series of initiatives in order from most preferred to least preferred, were reported and resulted in a decrease in the number of responses received for those particular questions. However, the

number of 'skipped' responses did not have an impact on the validity of the responses provided. Additionally, the manner in which the survey was distributed was called into question with some in the community voicing their concerns that certain elements of the community, such as non-homeowners and the youth, did not have the opportunity to take the survey and whose views were not represented. The consultant team clarified that the survey was distributed according to staff's recommendations and the survey was advertised and made available online in an effort capture as many responses as possible. Moreover, demographic information taken from the survey indicated a close correlation with the Town of Buena Vista's demographic results obtained in connection with the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey which indicated a representative sample of the town was obtained by the survey.

First Steering Committee – 21 May 2015

In conjunction with the first Public Meeting to be held later that evening, Stan Clauson Associates met with members of the Steering Committee to review survey results, take part in several planned outreach exercises to be employed at the Public Meeting, and to discuss issues and topics in the survey that had arisen and needed to be addressed further. The survey results were closely reviewed question by question and a general discussion pursued.

Topics discussed with the Steering Committee ranged from improvements to Main Street, the need to provide for a steady stream of business rather than business centered around special events, the need for childcare, and the need for new business so that young members of the community can get a job that enables them to stay. Issues with the current Land Use Code were also discussed and the Steering Committee agreed that the code should be simplified. Members of the Steering Committee discussed that the land use approval process is perceived as being cumbersome because so many applications are required to go before the Board of Trustees and so many of these meetings require multiple hearings. The difficulty in obtaining approvals may be one reason why some believe that Buena Vista is "anti-business." The Steering Committee also discussed the state of infrastructure in the community, noting that discontinuous sidewalks make walking difficult and discouraging. The topic of how to pay for infrastructure improvements was mentioned and it was discussed that seeking to develop public/private partnerships as a means to pay for infrastructure would be useful as well as encouraging development to pay its own way. However requiring development to pay its own way was also seen as potentially creating a situation where only projects with high profit potential would get built.

Following review of the survey results, a Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threats or S.W.O.T. exercise on small town character was introduced and performed. In a S.W.O.T. exercise, a moderator asks a group of respondents to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats involved in achieving a particular community objective.

Results of the S.W.O.T. on small town character conducted with the Steering Committee produced such strengths as the town's size, its people, history, and location, and the strength of the town's locally owned businesses. Weaknesses provided consisted of the lack of infrastructure, a divided vision for the future by members of the community, a prevailing fear of change, the fact that the town is too appealing, the lack of opportunity for youth, and a lack of cultural diversity. Opportunities consisted of the availability of vacant buildings, the potential for infill opportunities, the town's unique history, and the natural beauty which surrounds the community. Threats identified were that Buena Vista is again too appealing, issues with water rights to non-locals, fundamental economic issues, competition, and the corrosive effects of a consumer culture, the town's image as prison town, and a relatively short summer season.

Additional Focus Group Meetings – 21 May 2015

Continuing the valuable feedback received from the various focus group meetings held on 7 April, additional meetings were scheduled with the Beautification Committee and the Housing Task Force. The Beautification Committee reviewed with staff and the consultant team the projects that they have been recently pursuing and projects to be pursued in the near future. These projects included the creation of planters, snowflake decorations for Highway 24, benches on Main Street,

and improvements to the Town's holiday decorations. Longer range projects planned include a welcome arch across Highway 24, improvements to medians to be pursued in connection with the Access Control Plan, and a xeriscape educational garden aimed at educating the public on alternatives to water intensive landscaping. Members of the Beautification Committee provided that past work has been funded with donations but that new work will receive monetary support from the Town of Buena Vista. Issues with collaboration and communication with the Town and other groups need to be addressed with the Main Street Committee a key to bring the groups and committees together. All agreed that the Comprehensive Plan Update should make beautification of the Town a priority.

While many members of the Housing Committee were unaware of the focus group meeting, several members happened to be present from previous meetings and provided useful insight into the Housing Committee's efforts. It was provided that recommendations on the creation of new affordable housing were presented to the Trustees in March of 2015. Members of the Committee stressed that there needs to be a change in attitude of residents and that education may be useful in countering the "not in my back yard" position commonly held of affordable housing projects. The lack of grants is holding back affordable housing projects and this funding gap has made collaboration with the Chaffee County Council of Governments very important.



First Public Meeting – 21 May 2015

The First Public Meeting was initially intended to present a "clicker" or electronic voting session but due to technical issues with the voting session software, the clicker session was postponed until 2 June. As planned, the survey results were reviewed with attendees and the same questions on methodology and distribution of the survey were made by some attendees. The issues with the survey revolved around the notion that some felt that the results did not adequately provide a true snap shot of the community and this was due to the fact that the survey was only distributed to the homeowners and that very few responses from young people have been provided. The method of distribution of the survey, which was determined by the Town of Buena Vista, was discussed as the most reasonable method of distributing the survey. The consultant team provided that though there were some confusion on several of the questions, a significant portion of the residents of the Town provided feedback and the feedback was generally supported by the other outreach the consultant team has performed.

SWOT exercises were pursued with attendees which considered housing and the need for year round jobs. These topics were suggested by attendees. On the topic of housing, attendees provided that strengths in the Buena Vista community consisted of the availability of affordable land, the opportunity to pursue infill within the existing Town boundaries, the Town's history, and the proximity to public lands. Weaknesses inhibiting housing consisted of lack of assisted living facilities, the general unaffordability of existing housing stock, the cost of development of housing, the lack of rentals, infrastructure, homes that are reasonably sized to be affordable, and diversity of housing types. Opportunities for housing consisted of the availability of vacant land, the upcoming Land Use Code rewrite which can facilitate the construction of new housing, the general potential for growth in the Town, and the potential to utilize cooperatives. Threats to housing were identified as water issues, the cost to the City for providing additional housing and related infrastructure, lack of employment opportunities, the notion of gentrification, the issues with over regulation and roadblocks to development caused by the current Land Use Code, and the fear that our small town feeling will be lost.

The topic of year round job creation was consider next. Strengths identified in the community to support this goal were the expansion of the tourism industry, the growing population of Town, accessibility to Town, the broadening scope of the airport, the strong entrepreneurial ethos in the community, and the growing interest in the arts. Weakness to year round job creation included lack of housing, issues with retaining the youth of the community, gaps in the transportation network, the lack of year round employers, the lack of year round businesses, the lack of investment, over regulation, the wage gap, the roadblocks to starting a new business, and the lack of training of the potential workforce living in the community. Opportunities consisted of good schools, a pleasant location, the growing interest in the arts, the upcoming update of the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code, the Chaffee County Economic Development Corporation, and the presence of Colorado Mountain College. Threats to year round job creation were provided as the length of time it takes to become a registered business, the often harsh climate, competition of other communities for the same jobs, and the issues with access during the winter.

The first public meeting concluded with attendees being invited to stay and review the various stations that had been set up around the room which were aimed at soliciting additional feedback on various topics. The attendees were also encouraged to meet with the consultant team to discuss issues and to brainstorm possible solutions.

Clicker Session / Charrette – 2 June 2015

Two sessions of clicker voting and charrette exercise were pursued with the community. The first session was held at noon and aimed at capturing people on the lunch break. The second was held at 5:00pm and was intended to capture attendees after work and school. Both sessions were well attended with approximately 30 attendees during the first session and 38 at the second session. Prior to the initiation of the clicker session, Ford Frick of BBC Research & Consulting provided some general observations of the economic condition of the community which he believes indicates a community in good fiscal health. Tareq Wafaie of Clarion Associates followed with comments relating to the upcoming Land Use Code update. Tareq reviewed the fundamental differences between the comprehensive plan process and the Land Use Code update. The analogy provided by Tareq was that the comprehensive plan is similar to the Town's constitution and the Land Use Code is the Town's laws. Essentially, the Land Use Code will help implement the policy direction given by the Comprehensive Plan. Tareq stresses that the two processes, while related, are separate projects.

With the technical issues with the clicker session software corrected, the consultant team utilized Turning Point software, a software program that works with Microsoft PowerPoint, to provide real-time polling results. The clicker session questions were aimed at digging deeper into some of the themes that arose from the paper survey. Clicker responses were recorded via hand-held voting devices by session attendees. Attendees were asked to provide their response to the questions by selecting the most appropriate response. Attendees were allowed to change their responses until the particular question was closed to voting. The questions were closed based on the number and frequency of received responses. Attendees were informed that they could ask questions at any time and/or ask for clarification of the questions being asked.

The clicker session contained thirty-four substantive questions, with a few questions intended to familiarize attendees to the voting



process and add levity to the sessions. The Turning Point software made it possible that results were immediately available. For every question the results were briefly reviewed. Generally, two or three of the top responses were highlighted with close results pointed out. The clicker session was broken into five categories which included:

- Introduction and Demographics
- Infrastructure
- Land Use/Local Government
- Community/Vitality and
- Housing

A good majority of both sessions (89.66% noon, 73.33% evening) had a good time responding to questions!

Charrette Sessions – 2 June 2015

Following the clicker session, attendees were invited to break into small groups to participate in a Charrette sessions. Four tables were set up which corresponded to the four following topics:

- Housing
- Land Use / Local Government
- Community Vitality
- Infrastructure

At the four tables attendees were provided with a base map, trace paper to draw and provide comments on, drawing materials, and list of suggested topics to discuss. Each table was manned by a consultant to foster dialogue, direct comment, and obtain feedback. All attendees were encouraged to visit each table. Charrette sessions at each table lasted approximately 15 minutes. The comments and the mapping exercises provided very meaningful information and confirmation of areas of concern for the community, opportunities for increased trail and pedestrian amenities, and information on the general perception of growth, environmental concerns, and areas in which Buena Vista needs assistance.

Following the Clicker and Charrette session, the formal public outreach portion of the Comprehensive Plan Update was concluded. Rich with empirical data, feedback on existing community initiatives, and the good conversations had with many members of the community and the local government, the consultant team turned their attention to the task of synthesizing the feedback into the creation of a meaningful and accessible Comprehensive Plan document.



Postcards from the Future

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?

Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

I think I would like Buena Vista to have and the town would like Buena Vista to have

- A rec center
- They should pave any roads that are used a lot.
- I think we should have more bike lanes
- sidewalks
- public transit centers

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From:
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?

Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

When I come back to Buena Vista in 10 years. I want Buena Vista to have a fish building, a big one too. I also want a Petsmart so I can get all of the supplies for my pets. I want a rec center too. A Rec Center has all the sports things like basketball courts, weight rooms, rocketball courts, swimming pools (with water slides), and maybe indoor soccer fields.

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From: Cole, Carroll
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?

Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

The community should consider paying for working-class homes as an investment that will pay off in the future in the form of a more developed and stable economy and citizen base.

increase internet infrastructure the future of the small business lies online

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From: John Doe
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?

Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

I want to see more affordable housing for the working class.

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From:
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?

Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

I want to see Buena Vista with a lot of changes. I want to see growth in a positive way on a large scale.

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From: Colton Walker
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?

Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

I want to see way better roads with no bump outs, and medians. I want to see a new school, better street lighting, and more benches.

This town needs to look more to the future, mostly the roads. Roads are made for cars nothing else.

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From: Trent Gonzalez
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?
Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

The community should consider investing in a recreational facility for the population of Buena Vista. Side walks + bike lanes along Highway 24 would also be beneficial. Historical buildings should be preserved in order to maintain the history of Buena Vista.

Beckey

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From: _____
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?
Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

Paving w/ recycled asphalt should be an option
crosswalks: many student cross to loaf n' Jug and Subway between 11:35 + 12:00
signs + branding: rafting, Arkansas River, Mnt. Princeton, deer
other ideas: recycling center, small outlet mall (ne 21, etc)
Adobe Apartments on Cedar Street needs a paved parking lot and better landscaping.
More places need "Free WiFi" available. Internet service is a huge part of BV.

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From: Sam Hartman
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?
Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

In Buena Vista there should be screening rules for dumpsters. There should also be a limit on how tall the fences should be. This still allows people to have beautiful views. In the town the water should be protected. We should also give more bike lanes to the town. The historic Building should also be protected.

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From: Abby
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?
Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

I think Buena Vista should keep a historic look but we need more things to do every day. One thing was to drive to: Salida, Colorado Springs, Denver or somewhere not very close to go shopping or go get groceries. When people come up and visit and in the summer when town is very busy there's no parking around, so we need more parking spaces and places to go not a lot of people are used to not having fast food. We need more parking, fast food restaurants, and/or grocery stores to have more things to do in Buena Vista.

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From: Bailey Herman
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?
Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

I would love to see it the same, but some kind of rec center, with a pool. We also should have some more trees.

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From: Megan
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

What do you want Buena Vista to look like in 10 years?
Write (or draw) a message from your future self to the Citizens of Buena Vista!

I would love to keep it like this, but with a rec center + a new middle/high school.

To: The Citizens of the Community
Year 2015
Buena Vista, CO 81211

From: School by 11
Year 2025
Buena Vista, CO 81211

